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THE SQUAW SACHEM SELLS HER LANDS TO JOHN WINTHROP
From the Mural Painting by Aiden L. Ripley in the Winchester Public Library

HISTORY OF WINCHESTER MASSACHUSETTS

BY
HENRY SMITH CHAPMAN
DRAWINGS BY W. H. W. BICKNELL



PUBLISHED BY THE TOWN OF WINCHESTER

1936

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FOREWORD

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The circumstances which led up to the writing of this history are not without interest. Early in the business depression, a committee of citizens under the chairmanship of Mr. Frederic S. Snyder raised a large fund by private subscription to be used for the relief of unemployment. Difficulty was found in providing work for educated men and women who were not suited for manual labor. Mr. George T. Davidson, vice-chairman of the committee, conceived the idea of employing such persons to collect facts relating to the history of the town. A large amount of material was collected. It was soon apparent, however, that this work could not be effectively done except under expert supervision. The matter was taken up with Dr. J. Harper Blaisdell, president of the Winchester Historical Society, with the result that the town was asked to appropriate a sum of money for the writing and publishing of a town history. The town made an appropriation for the writing of the history and a committee was appointed to secure a competent author and historical investigator and to supervise the work. Very appropriately the town authorized the withdrawal of the necessary amount from the Winchester Fund, which had been given to the town by Colonel William P. Winchester in appreciation of the honor of having the town named for him. When the history had been written, a further sum was appropriated for printing it.

The committee was fortunate in securing the services of one of its own townsmen, Mr. Henry S. Chapman, to whom the committee desires to express its appreciation for the vast amount of research which he has made and for the literary form in which he has cast the results of his investigations.

EDGAR J. RICH, *Chairman*

A. NATALIE JEWETT, *Secretary*

J. HARPER BLAISDELL

GEORGE T. DAVIDSON

BERTHA G. THOMPSON

Committee on Winchester Town History

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This book is something more than the chronicles of the incorporated town of Winchester. It is the story of a community, which, even while it was included within the corporate limits of two or three other places, developed a flavor and individuality of its own, insomuch that the town, when it was at last formed, was only an inevitable step in the development of that preëxistent community. Few Massachusetts towns, even of the original constellation, have accumulated more material for a book of this description. A surprising number of Winchester citizens have been diligent in searching out the origins and antiquities of this ancient community, and their labors have made the task of the present writer the lighter.

I wish to recognize my indebtedness to the researches and reminiscences of such enthusiastic local historians as Abijah and Leander Thompson, Rev. George Cooke, Arthur E. Whitney, Nathaniel A. Richardson, Moses W. Mann, Oliver R. Clark, Luther R. Symmes, Charles A. Lane and E. A. Wadleigh in particular, and to all the contributors who have made the collections of the old Winchester Historical Society, printed in its *Record*, and in the Winchester *Press*, such a mine of useful historical material.

I acknowledge also the generous help that I have received from many now living — Samuel S. Symmes, Miss Helen Twombly, Miss Cora A. Quimby, E. Henry Stone, Daniel W. Kimball, Miss Jean McLellan and Henry C. Robinson. Miss Twombly's careful work in tracing the history of the Squaw Sachem land and of the early families who dwelt on the West Side and the Andrews Hill region is especially valuable. A word of appreciation is due to Walter C. Goddard for his transcription of many significant documents.

I am grateful for the unfailing support and consideration which the committee in charge of this work has shown me, and for the help that I have received from all the town officials whom I have had occasion to consult.

Whatever is of value herein these collaborators, past and present, may claim as their contribution. The faults are my own, and I hope there are not too many of them.

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HISTORY OF WINCHESTER

CHAPTER I

THE PREHISTORY OF WINCHESTER. THE SQUAW SACHEM AND HER RED MEN

THE town of Winchester lies within a pleasant valley at the head of the Mystic Lakes. The eastern wall of this valley is formed by the rocky ridge of the Middlesex Fells, still largely covered by forest growth, and now one of the most picturesque parts of the beautiful Metropolitan Park system. To the southwest and west the valley is enclosed by the tumbled cluster of hills, which, under various names — Myopia Hill, Andrews Hill, Turkey Hill, Indian Hill and Zion's Hill — stretch in the direction of Arlington Heights and Lexington; by the rounded summit of Horn Pond Mountain and the ledges of Blueberry Hill in Woburn. Northward the floor of the valley slopes gradually upward to the higher ground on which Woburn stands. Southward it is prolonged toward the sea by the trough in which lie the Mystic Lakes and the course of the Mystic River.

Properly speaking, this is a part of the Mystic Valley, though the narrow and placid stream that winds through it, to fall into the twin lakes, bears in Winchester the name not of the Mystic but of the Aberjona River. A characteristic and very charming feature of the region is the number of attractive bodies of water that lie in and around it. Besides the Mystic Lakes, the natural beauty of which is comparable to that of many famous lakes that Americans travel far to admire, there are Horn Pond, Wedge Pond, Winter Pond and Black Ball Pond, all on the valley floor, while on the heights above the town and in the Middlesex Fells are Long Pond and the three artificially created reservoirs that supply Winchester with water. It is no wonder that the first white men who visited the spot, and saw the gleam of water on every side shining through the trees of the primeval forest, gave it the lovely name of Waterfield, which might well have been preserved as the name of the town that grew up there.

Winchester itself lies some eight miles from the salt water of Boston Harbor, but so gradual is the descent thereto that the center of the village is scarcely twenty-five feet above sea level. The hills that lie about the town rise some two hundred feet above it; in the case of Horn Pond Mountain about four hundred feet. The houses of the town fill most of the level floor of the valley, which varies from a mile to a mile and a half in width, and they creep up the hill-sides as well, especially on the side toward the Middlesex Fells. Those which stand on the high ground of Highland Avenue or of Myopia and Andrews Hills command prospects as wide and as attractive as can be found anywhere in the immediate neighborhood of Boston. In the Fells themselves the people of Winchester share with those of the neighboring towns and cities of Melrose, Stoneham, Malden and Medford the advantage of having at their very doors a lovely forested park, whose striking beauties of hill and dale, bold ledges of rock, sparkling ponds and melodiously running brooks have been, as far as is possible, preserved for the enjoyment of those who love the charm of nature unspoiled by the artifices of man.

This Mystic Valley of which we speak has a very interesting geological history. Thousands upon thousands of years before any man, white or red, looked upon it, it was the course of the great river which today we call the Merrimac, then a much wider and deeper stream than it is today. There was then no great bend at Lowell; the river flowed in a nearly straight line southeastward from the mountains and lakes of New Hampshire. It poured its flood of water right down the valley where Winchester now stands, through the bed of the present Mystic Lakes, and then directly across the ground where Cambridge, Allston and the south end of Boston were later built, and so into Boston Harbor and the sea, the shores of which lay several miles further to the eastward than they do today. Geologists can trace that old river bed through almost every foot of its course by the deposits of gravel and silt that the water laid down.

Then — perhaps forty thousand years ago — came the Ice Age. All this part of New England was buried for ages under an immense sheet of ice. Eventually conditions changed again; the glaciers melted and disappeared; but as they did so they left behind

enormous quantities of "glacial drift" — gravel and clay and loose boulders of rock which they had scraped up and carried southward with them, frozen into the ice. The drift was so thick in the old bed of the Merrimac that the river, released at last from its prison of ice, found its former path to the sea completely blocked. Accordingly it turned eastward at the present site of Lowell and scoured out for itself a new course to the sea at Newburyport. Only the diminished stream of the Aberjona remained to occupy the lordly valley of the ancient river.

But if the Ice Age took away the river it left something beautiful in its place. All the charming lakes and ponds, so characteristic of Winchester scenery, were born of the departing glacier. In some cases their beds were scooped out of the existing soil by the ploughing masses of ice; in others they were formed by great blocks of ice which became detached from the retreating glaciers and were buried under the drift of sand and gravel. When in time these fields of ice melted, the gravel that covered them slumped in, causing more or less rounded depressions in which the water gathered. When underground springs were present, or when there was sufficient drainage from the surrounding slopes, these ponds, so formed, became permanent. They are called "kettle ponds" from a fancied resemblance of their basins to the inside of a kettle. Winter Pond is a perfect example of a kettle pond. Wedge Pond and Horn Pond were very likely formed in the same way, at least in part.

To the valley thus devastated and reshaped by the forces of nature, vegetation began to return; first the hardier grasses and shrubs and then, as the climate continued to moderate, the trees that are the glory of New England — pine and spruce and hemlock, oak, ash, birch, maple and elm. Forests covered the land of which our Winchester valley was a part, from the high places to the shores of the ocean, except in low-lying spots along the coast or in the interior where marshes and swamps gathered and formed ground too wet for tree growth. It was this wide-spreading forest, dark, shadowy, inhospitable, yet rich in the timber that was to be one of their earliest sources of wealth, that faced the English colonists on every side when they first stepped on the shores of New England.

We read, however, that there was, here and there, open country among the trees; meadows and grass lands, which required little

labor to make them fit for the plough. There is reason to believe that a part of the Winchester west side, which lies level beneath the slopes of Andrews Hill, was one of these open, grassy areas. There were also clearings which the Indians had made for the growing of corn or other purposes. Thomas Morton of Merrymount remarks that "the savages are accustomed to set fire of the country in all places where they come, and to burn it . . . at the Spring and at the fall of the leaf. . . . Otherwise it would be so overgrown with under-weeds that it would be all a coppice wood and the people would not be able to pass in any wise through the country out of a beaten path."¹ Yet the prevailing aspect of the country was that of a great forest wilderness, "an uncouth wilderness," yet "full of stately timber," as the first settlers of Charlestown described it.

While we are speaking of the return of vegetation to the plains and hills that lie within the borders of Winchester it is interesting to note that little Winter Pond is remarkable for certain very rare plants that are found growing upon its shores. These plants are southern species nowhere else found as far north as the latitude of Winchester, while one of them, at least, has not been found any nearer to our town than northern Georgia or central Illinois. Among these plants are the *Coreopsis Rosea*, the nut rush (*Scleria Reticularis*), the rattle box (*Crotalaria Sagittalis*) and the wild sensitive plant (*Cassia Nictitans*). All of these are rarely seen farther north than Cape Cod and Rhode Island, and never north of Winter Pond. The most exceptional specimen of our Winchester flora, one that is so unusual that it apparently has no common name, and is known only by its botanical name, *Scirpus Halli*, grows near Winter Pond, but nowhere else within a thousand miles.²

All these plants are believed to be of preglacial origin, driven southward by the advancing ice, and not sufficiently hardy to regain a foothold in their former territory when the glacier retreated. Why Winter Pond should prove so much more hospitable to these declining species than many hundreds of ponds similar to it in every observable respect is a question even the botanists cannot answer.

The time came at last when the land was again fit for human

¹ New English Canaan.

² Lyman B. Smith, instructor in botany at Harvard. Article read before the Winchester Historical Society, 1934.

habitation, and at some unknown period in the past Indian tribes, migrating undoubtedly from the west or southwest, came to occupy the forest country of our New England states. They were all of the Algonquin race, a people at once less intelligent and less warlike than some other redskins — the Iroquois for example — and far less advanced than their distant cousins who lived in Mexico or in our own Southwest. They were not without their savage virtues, however, for they were a tall, well-proportioned race, skillful hunters and fishermen, and good enough farmers to raise corn and pumpkins on ground that they had cleared and burned over for the purpose. They were stone-age people, of course, and seem to have known nothing of metals. Their arrowheads of chipped flint, their stone axes and gouges and pestles were scattered widely over the country around Winchester, and in the early days were often turned up by the plough. Several interesting relics of this sort are to be seen today in the room of the Winchester Historical Society in the Public Library building.¹

The Indians who dwelt hereabouts belonged to a tribe whose members called themselves Pawtuckets. This tribe seems to have been the head of a loose confederacy of wandering savages, which, under varying names, occupied not only the territory that now forms Essex and Middlesex counties in Massachusetts but southern New Hampshire as far as the sites of Concord and Portsmouth, and perhaps a bit of southern Maine as well. The early settlers used a confusing number of designations to describe these Indians. They were often called Aberginians, which is manifestly a name of English rather than Indian manufacture, but the origin of which is obscure. Some writers have tried to connect it with the name of our placid Winchester river, the Aberjona, which seems likewise more English than Indian in composition. This name appears very early — at least as early as the settlement of Woburn — but without any explanation of its derivation; and it has been a sad puzzle to the antiquarians ever since. The learned Mr. Cutter,² to whom we are indebted for so much valuable research into the

¹ A most interesting Indian relic is to be seen on the summit of Horn Pond Mountain. It is a deep bowl-like depression in a ledge of rock, either artificially made or, if natural originally, adapted to their purposes by the Indians. They certainly used it as a mortar for grinding their corn into meal. A much smaller rock mortar is to be seen in the woods near the foot of the North Reservoir.

² William R. Cutter of Woburn.

history of our own and neighboring towns, convinced himself that the first part of the word was the Celtic "aber" which is common in Scottish and Welsh place names, and is said to mean "the place where a small river flows into a larger, or into the sea." It seems unlikely that settlers from the eastern countries of England should have imported a word which was unfamiliar in their native districts; but even if Cutter is right in this he had to confess himself unable to account for the "jona." Nor has anyone else ever been able to do so.

The Pawtuckets regarded the Charles River as their southern frontier. Beyond that, around the head of Boston Bay and to the southwest thereof, lived the Massachusetts, a kindred tribe that seems to have differed from the Pawtuckets only in the region they inhabited. Both these groups of Indians were once comparatively numerous. When Captain John Smith explored the coast of Massachusetts in 1614 he found the shores along which he passed "all a long, large corn-field," and saw "great troops of well-proportioned people" on every hand.¹ Thomas Morton, the gay and lively pioneer of Merrymount, whose lack of seriousness and piety so scandalized the Pilgrim Fathers that they felt obliged to break up his settlement, relates that the Indians of the region were wont to boast that "they were so many God himself could not kill them."²

But a few years before fate led the white men to their shores, these complacent redskins fell upon evil days. For some obscure savage reason they incurred the hostility of the Tarratines, a related "nation" that lived along the eastern coast of Maine. The Tarratines proved to be the better fighters. They overran the whole region from the Kennebec to the Charles. The slaughter of the Pawtuckets was, as Sir Ferdinando Gorges reports, "horrible to be spoken of."³ Nanepashemet, the great sachem of the Pawtuckets, hastily removed his home from the borders of the great marshes between Lynn and Revere to the high land at the southern extremity of the Middlesex Fells, which could be more easily defended. His last palisaded fort was probably on Rock Hill in Medford, only a mile or so from the present borders of Winchester.

¹ Smith, *Generall Historie*.

² Morton, *New English Canaan*.

³ Gorges, *Brief Narratives in Mass. Hist. Society Collections*, Vol. 26.

Its remains were seen by Englishmen in 1621, as we shall learn in the next chapter.¹

Following this disaster came a worse one in the shape of a mysterious pestilence which carried off most of those who had escaped the tomahawks of the Tarratines. This plague seems to have descended on the unhappy red men about 1616 or 1617, and it ravaged all the Indian tribes of eastern Massachusetts. Cotton Mather heard it said in after years that "nine parts in ten, yea nineteen parts in twenty" died of this mysterious plague, which some believe to have been smallpox. Thomas Morton draws a horrid picture of the piles of bones and skulls that he himself saw in the abandoned villages in the neighborhood of Merrymount. Another writer of a later day was told by the Indians that the Pawtuckets, who formerly numbered three thousand warriors, besides women and children, were reduced by this pestilence to two hundred and fifty fighting men.

The tribe thus enfeebled was finally attacked once more by the implacable Tarratines, and the great sachem Nanepashemet was killed defending his Rock Hill stockade. Contrary to the usual custom among the red men the authority over the remnants of the Pawtuckets fell not to another warrior but to his widow. This was the famous Squaw Sachem — we know her by no other name — whose relations with the settlers of Charlestown and of so many other of the Middlesex towns form so peculiar and picturesque a feature of early Massachusetts history. Nanepashemet had left three sons, whom the white men later came to know as Sagamore John (of Charlestown), Sagamore James (of Lynn) and Sagamore George (of Salem). But they were only boys at the time of his death, and the slaughter among the warriors had perhaps been so great that no ambitious brave cared to assume the responsibility of restoring the confederacy, shattered by war and pestilence, to its former importance.

Nevertheless the Squaw Sachem, though she may have owed

¹ Many years later (in 1862), the skeletons of five Indians were uncovered in a field belonging to Edward Brooks in West Medford by laborers who were digging there. One skeleton seemed to be that of a chief, for near it lay a soapstone pipe with a copper mouthpiece, a rare and valuable possession for a redman. It has been suggested that these may have been the bones of Nanepashemet, for they were found not far from the Rock Hill stronghold where he met his death. The skeletons were all sent to the Peabody Museum at Harvard University.

her rule to extraordinary and unhappy conditions, must have been a woman of parts and character to have retained, as she did, her authority for some thirty years. She it was with whom Governor Winthrop, Increase Nowell and the Rev. John Wilson dealt when



SAGAMORE JOHN'S MONUMENT

the settlement of this part of the country was undertaken, and they always treated her and spoke of her with respect. She married, after Nane-pashemet's death, the chief powwow or medicine man of the tribe, whose name was Webcowet, but seemingly surrendered to him none of her prerogatives.

The Squaw Sachem and her three sons were from the first friendly and hospitable to the white man; they deeded land generously to them, and often visited their growing villages at Charlestown and Lynn. Sagamore John (to whose memory a simple but dignified monument was erected not many years ago at the "ancient

Indian burial place" which is now on Sagamore Avenue in West Medford, near the shores of Mystic Lakes) was a particular admirer of the white men's ways, and became, after a fashion, a Christian. He died of smallpox only three years after the settlement of Charlestown, but he made, as the Puritan chronicles tell us, an edifying end, and left his infant son to be brought up by the Rev. Mr. Wilson of the church in Boston. This child died soon after his father, it is believed, for nothing more is heard of him.

It was perhaps true that it was the good fortune of the colonists of Massachusetts Bay to have come upon the scene when the savage spirit of the Pawtuckets was broken by their misfortunes and when they were ready to welcome the newcomers as possible



VIEW OF THE UPPER MYSTIC LAKE

The land in the background is the Squaw Sachem's Land

allies and protectors against foes of their own race. Both Cotton Mather and Sir Ferdinando Gorges did not hesitate to entertain the pious belief that it was by a special interposition of Providence that so many savages were cleared out of the way to make room for "God's people." Whatever the reason, however, it is pleasant to record the cordial relations that always existed between our forefathers and the gentle, friendly Squaw Sachem. Her memory is especially worthy of perpetuation among Winchester folk, for her favorite place of residence, as we learn from many early sources, was on the western shore of Mystic Lake within the present limits of our town. Her own particular lands, which she reserved for herself when she deeded so much territory to the settlers of Charlestown, stretched all the way up and down the lake shore, but her wigwam stood oftenest on the land of the old Swan farm, now the property of the Winchester Country Club, perhaps near the ever-running spring, which still bears the name of the Squaw Sachem Spring.¹

There may be no better place than this, before proceeding to the story of the settlement of Winchester and Woburn by the people of Charlestown, to narrate briefly the story of the further relations of the Squaw Sachem and her family with the white men. Many years before her death — as early as 1636 in fact — the "Indian Queen of Misticke" had executed a deed, which is still to be seen among the records of Middlesex County,² providing that those personal lands of hers spoken of above should after her death be the property of Jotham Gibbons, the young son of that Major Edward Gibbons who was among the leaders of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and later attained to the dignity and title of Major General. The deed makes it clear that the transaction was a gift and not a sale: "This I do without seeking to of him or any of his; [i.e. without solicitation by him;] but I receiving many kindnesses of them, am willing to acknowledge their many kindnesses by this small gift to their son." What these kindnesses were that had awakened so lively an emotion of gratitude in the Sachem's breast there is unfortunately nothing to show.

¹ This spring is on the property of Mr. John Abbott, adjacent to the Country Club. A tradition, probably without any foundation, has it that the Squaw Sachem met her death (about 1650) by drowning in the brook that is fed by this spring.

² Registry of Deeds, Book I, page 174.

The land in question stretched, as we have said, all along the western shore of the Mystic Lakes. Its northern boundary was a little south of the present line of Everett Avenue in Winchester; on the south it was bounded by Sucker Brook in Arlington (or Menotomy as it then was), just south of the present Summer Street in that town. Already in 1636 one Captain Cooke had built a gristmill on that stream, which is frequently referred to in the records of the time. At the Winchester end the Sachem's land ran some half mile up the slopes of Myopia Hill to its summit. At the other end it narrowed to a few rods in width at the brook.

The Squaw Sachem remained undisturbed mistress of this plot of land until her death in 1650.¹ Then, after some delay, Major General Gibbons took possession of the land in behalf of his son Jotham, who was then living in Bermuda. Presently we find Jotham, pressed for money, mortgaging the property to a well-to-do Boston merchant, Joshua Scottow. Then we learn that the land had been "redeemed" by Captain Samuel Scarlett, which means that he took over the mortgage. Scarlett was a sea captain and, as events proved, a friend of the Gibbons family. When Jotham Gibbons died, still a young man, in 1658, without having been able to pay off the mortgage, Scarlett became the virtual owner of the land, which was for many years known as "Scarlett's Farm."

But Scarlett was no farmer; he was off at sea the greater part of the time, and he leased the farm in 1658 to one Thomas Gleason. From that time, for several years, the property was in almost constant litigation. We find Gleason suing Henry Dunster, president of Harvard College and an executor of the estate of Captain Cooke (of the grist-mill), for trespass in sending men to cut hay on land along Sucker Brook to which Gleason laid claim. A little later he is bringing suit against Richard Gardner for encroaching on the "Squaw Sachem" land at the Winchester end. He won both suits, but was soon involved as defendant in a more difficult case. The town of Charlestown, through two of its citizens, Captain Francis Norton and Nicholas Davidson, undertook to dispossess Scarlett and Gleason entirely, and to get possession of the land for the town.

¹ For this date see a deposition by Richard Church in the lawsuit of Scarlett and Gleason *vs.* Gardner.

The basis of this suit was laid in the conflicting wording of two deeds given by the Squaw Sachem during her life. The first, signed in 1636, to which we have already referred, disposed of her land to the Gibbons family upon her death. The other, signed April 15, 1639, was that in which she and her husband Webcowet released to Charlestown "all the land granted them by the Court excepting the farms and ground on the west of the two great ponds called Misticke ponds, from the south side of Mr. Nowell's lot, near the upper end of the lakes, unto the little runnel that cometh from Captain Cooke's mill. . . . and after the death of Squaw Sachem she doth leave all her lands from Mr. Mayhew's house to near Salem to the present Governor John Winthrop, Sr., Mr. Increase Nowell, Mr. John Wilson and Mr. Edward Gibbons to dispose of . . . and for satisfaction from Charlestown we acknowledge to have received in full satisfaction twenty- and one coats, nineteen fathoms of wampum and three bushels of corn."¹ A few months later the four men named in the deed made over all their interest in the land thus conveyed to the town of Charlestown, for which they had acted as agents. This deed, as we learn from the testimony of Rev. John Wilson, was signed "at the wigwam of the Squaw Sachem," which was almost certainly on land now in Winchester, either near the spring already mentioned, or, as Frothingham suggests in his *History of Charlestown*, near "Gardner Row," which was a later name for that part of Cambridge Street between Church Street and the upper Mystic Lake.

Now the representatives of Charlestown asserted that this deed was the legal one, since the earlier one had but one witness and was improperly drawn and dated, and they held that the land occupied by Gleason on lease from the Gibbons heirs was part of the grant here made to Winthrop, Nowell, Wilson and Gibbons in trust for the people of Charlestown. When the case came to trial in 1662 it appeared that there was still a third deed made by the Squaw Sachem and her husband November 13, 1639. This document confirmed that of 1636, named young Jotham Gibbons as heir to the land in dispute,² and was accompanied by an explana-

¹ Middlesex Deeds, Book I, page 175. It is the negotiation of this transfer of land, which included all of the present town of Winchester, that is commemorated by the mural painting in the Winchester Public Library.

² Middlesex Deeds, Book I, page 176.

tion that this land was no part of that conveyed to Winthrop, Nowell, Wilson and Gibbons. This explanatory writing was sworn to in the presence of such distinguished men as Governor Winthrop himself, John Endicott and Richard Saltonstall. There was also a statement from the venerable John Wilson that he had never considered the Gibbons land to be any part of the territory conveyed by the Sachem to the Charlestown men.

It is hard to see how Charlestown had any case at all. Yet it won two decisions in the County Court. But Gleason was a fighter. Though he was only a lessee, the land belonging to Captain Scarlett who was far away at sea, he carried his case to the Governor and Assistants sitting as a court of last appeal. This time he won and saw his persecutors assessed forty shillings for the costs of the appeal. This just judgment was rendered October 20, 1663; it put an end to all disputes regarding the true ownership of the Squaw Sachem land.

It is disappointing to learn that Thomas Gleason, who, although only a tenant of the farm, had put up so sturdy a fight against those who wished to spoil his absent landlord of his possessions, within two years got himself into a dispute with Scarlett over the cutting down of some trees, and had to move off the land in consequence.

The proof of Scarlett's friendly association with the Gibbons family and of his purchase of the mortgage on the Squaw Sachem farm to prevent it from falling into less considerate hands is found in the provisions of his will. He was killed in 1675 by an explosion on board his ship, then lying in Long Island Sound. When his will was probated, it was learned that he had bequeathed the farm to Love, the only daughter of Jotham Gibbons. She was still living in Bermuda, the wife of a man named Prout, and by a second marriage she became the wife of the Rev. John Fowle, also of Bermuda. The farm remained in her possession or that of her husband until 1706, when it was equitably divided among her eight children. They lost little time in turning it into cash, and through various transfers that part of it which lay in Winchester found its way into the hands of the Swan, the Gardner, the Wyman and the Reed families.

The only one of the Squaw Sachem's sons who survived her

was Sagamore George, "No Nose," as we hear him called in later years, though whether the deformity suggested was his from birth or was the result of accident we have no way of knowing. His Indian name was Wenepoykin; you will find him made a central figure in John Greenleaf Whittier's poem, "The Bridal of Pennacook," though he is there only by virtue of the fact that his name fitted the verse-maker's needs better than that of his brother Montowampate (otherwise Sagamore James), who was the real hero of the story. Wenepoykin had reason to regret the generosity of his mother and brothers to the palefaces, for we find him again and again petitioning the General Court and bringing suits at law to get possession of certain lands in Saugus which he claimed should have come to him on his brother John's death, but which various white men (among them Robert Keayne, first captain of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company) had seized and occupied. He never got any satisfaction, and that so far soured him toward the white men that he went on the warpath at the time of King Philip's War, was taken prisoner and sold into slavery in the West Indies. Somehow or other he got his freedom, for we find him back in Massachusetts among the "praying Indians" of Natick at the time of his death in 1684. He was the last sachem of the Pawtuckets. His people, reduced in numbers as we have seen by war and pestilence, had before this been pushed quite aside and dispersed by the expanding colony of Massachusetts Bay. Few were left alive after the bloodshed of King Philip's War, and they were wanderers, and in the thrifty Puritan phrase "vagabonds," without homes or tribal association. It is a familiar story. In like manner the red men were everywhere vanishing before the advance of European civilization. But there is no little pathos in this ending, in obscurity and wretchedness, of the line of that dignified and attractive figure, the Squaw Sachem, who wished to be known as the "friend of the white man."

For many years after the dissolution of the Pawtuckets as a tribe, single Indians or small bands of them were familiar sights in the vicinity of Winchester. Even as late as the early part of the last century parties used to appear in the summer time, paddling up the Mystic River and the lakes to visit the scenes that had been familiar to their ancestors. They were particularly attracted

to the vicinity of the Squaw Sachem's last home, and we have it from one of the Swan family that they often paid pathetically friendly visits to the farmhouse which stood so near the Sachem's spring. Sometimes they spent two or three months encamped on the shores of Horn Pond. Where they wandered to when winter came on is not known.

The last of the Indians to live hereabout was an old squaw who went by the name of Hannah Shiner. Brooks, the Medford historian, says that she lived at one time in West Medford in the same house with a mulatto man "of high character" who was called Tobey.¹ In later years, however, she lived by herself in a hut beneath an overhanging rock on the edge of Turkey Swamp in the Middlesex Fells. Her old dwelling place is now covered by the waters of Winchester's South Reservoir. In this secluded spot she existed, one hardly knows how; her only means of support what she could beg or make by the sale of the grass baskets she wove with no little skill. It is said that at one time she had her home in a shanty-like house near the corner of Church and Bacon Streets in Winchester² and was a familiar figure in the streets of the village. Hannah had, unluckily, an extravagant fondness for rum. She met her death while under the influence of that fiery liquor, in December 1820, having fallen from a bridge over the Aberjona at Winchester center, and drowned. The bridge was doubtless that on Main Street where the Converse bridge now is; there was then no other in existence in that vicinity. The poor woman's body was found and taken into the house of Abel Richardson, which stood hard by, and she had a funeral at which the Rev. Mr. Chickering preached from the text "And hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell upon the earth,"³ a sentiment to which Hannah Shiner, had she been able to hear it declaimed, might have thought her white neighbors had been a little slow in subscribing.

With her interment the last Indian, so far as we know, disappeared from the Mystic Valley.

¹ Brooks, *History of Medford*. Medford Hist. Register, Vol. XIII, No. 1.

² Cooke, *Winchester Record*, Vol. I, page 274.

³ Medford Hist. Register, Vol. XIII, No. 1.

CHAPTER II

WHITE MEN ON THE ABERJONA

FIRST SETTLEMENT AT WATERFIELD. WOBURN INCORPORATED

It would be interesting if we could be quite sure what Englishman or Englishmen first saw or set foot in the land which now forms the town of Winchester. It was certainly not John Smith, for his exploration of Boston Bay in 1614 was confined to the actual shore line; he did not penetrate far into the interior. But it is very possible that Edward Winslow and Myles Standish, conspicuous leaders of the Mayflower colony at Plymouth, viewed, if they did not visit, the valley above the Mystic Lakes. It was in September 1621 that these men and eight others, guided by three friendly Indians, one of whom was Squanto, who was the interpreter and useful handy man in all the Pilgrims' dealings with the Indians, sailed out of Plymouth harbor in a small shallop and laid their course northward. They were sent to spy out the region about the head of Massachusetts Bay, to try to establish friendly relations with the Indians there, and if possible to do a little trading. Standish, the "Captain" as the Pilgrim chroniclers always called him, was in command of the little expedition.

It was the twenty-ninth of September, a time of year when the New England country is at its loveliest, that the shallop entered Boston Bay and came to anchor somewhere off the headland of Squantum in Quincy. The next day a party went ashore. They found a heap of lobsters that the Indians had caught, and partook heartily of them. Then they pushed on, and soon came upon a frightened Indian woman, who, reassured by Squanto, directed them to the wigwam of a chief named Obbatinewat. This fellow, who seems to have been a skulking savage, was terrified out of his wits for fear of the Tarratines, whose annual raid for the looting of the unfortunate Massachusetts tribes he was daily expecting. He told Standish and Winslow of the Squaw Sachem, who was also, he said, his enemy, but was the chief sachem of those parts.

The Plymouth men determined to make search for her. They crossed the bay in their shallop, landed the next day, probably in Charlestown, and marched, according to their own guess, five or six miles into the country. It is hard to trace their course, for they do not describe it in any detail. But they did find, at the end of their march, both the "home" of the dead Nanepashemet where he lay buried, as they were told, in a grave covered with a frame of poles, and his stockaded fort on the top of a hill.¹ This would seem to correspond with the description of Nanepashemet's palisade on Rock Hill in Medford. If Standish and Winslow went no farther than this, they were at a spot from which they could look down over the Mystic Lakes and up into the valley where Winchester now stands. It is pretty certain that they did not go farther, for having found some of the natives there, they spent their time talking with them and trading for beaver skins.

They asked for the Squaw Sachem, but were told that she was not then in the neighborhood, so they gave up their search for her, marched back to their shallop and presently sailed back to Plymouth, taking with them a goodly store of beaver fur. They were, as Bradford tells us, much delighted with the beauty and fertility of the land they had seen and "wished they [the Plymouth colonists] had been there seated."² But the Pilgrims, who felt they had been led to their home in Plymouth by God's hand, and who were perhaps too canny to risk trouble by moving to a spot which (it was very possible) might already have been granted to some one else, determined to stay where they were. Bradford comments piously: "It seems the Lord, who arranges to all men the bounds of their habitation, had appointed it [the pleasant land along the Charles and the Mystic] for another use."

That use, as it soon appeared, was its occupation by the more numerous and prosperous company of Puritans, who were to establish the colony of Massachusetts Bay. It was in 1930 that the people of this state celebrated with much dignified enthusiasm the tercentenary of that colony. But as a matter of fact its roots reach deeper than that. It may be said to have issued directly from a venture of certain Puritan merchants of Dorchester in the west of

¹ Mourt's Relation, which is in part the Journal of Bradford and Winslow.

² Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation.

England, who despatched a ship's company to these shores to establish a trading colony on Cape Ann as early as 1623. The venture proved unprofitable, as so many similar ones did in the very early history of New England, and before long the Dorchester merchants withdrew their support. The settlers they had sent over did not all return to England, however. Some of them, guided by Roger Conant, a stout Puritan who had first come over to Plymouth but had abandoned the Pilgrim colony because he did not altogether like their complete separation from the Church of England, moved to the present site of Salem, then called Naumkeag. There they settled down to make what they could out of the wilderness.

Meanwhile John White, the Puritan rector of Dorchester, had an inspiration. Why not preserve the colony abandoned by the merchants as a bad commercial speculation, and make it over into a community of earnest religious believers, a refuge in the new world for the Puritans who were already finding life hard and persecution imminent under the rule of King Charles? He presented his ideas to leading Puritans all over England, and they found general favor. White and his friends were able to get a grant of land from the Council of New England reaching from three miles north of the Merrimac to three miles south of the Charles. Acting promptly, in order to get a foothold on their grant before anyone else laid claim to it, they sent over a party of sixty persons, of whom "Master John Endicott was the chief," to join the settlers already at Naumkeag. It was September 1628 when this company arrived. There was some discussion at first between the "old planters" and the new arrivals, but a friendly agreement was soon reached, and the significant name of Salem, which means in Hebrew "peace," was bestowed upon the settlement.

At home in England the movement John White had started grew fast. More and more influential Puritans became interested; more and more recruits professed themselves eager to go to New England. In March 1629 the king was persuaded to grant a charter creating a corporation to be known as the Governor and Company of Massachusetts Bay. That same year another company, this time four hundred in number, with abundance of cattle, tools and ammunition, emigrated to Salem under the leadership of Rev.

Francis Higginson. The next year came the great exodus. John Winthrop and Thomas Dudley, earnest Puritans and men of wealth and high standing in England, were chosen Governor and Deputy Governor of the newly chartered company, and they set sail in April 1630 at the head of a little fleet of ships laden with eager colonists. Before the end of the year seventeen vessels had brought more than a thousand new settlers, rigid Puritans all, to Salem harbor. John White's dream was most effectively realized.

All was not well with the new colony, however. There had been no little sickness and some deaths aboard the flotilla that brought Winthrop and the others to Salem; there was much scurvy among the passengers. Arrived at Salem they found sickness there too, and a scarcity of provisions for so many. During the summer and fall there were about two hundred deaths. Among them were the Rev. Francis Higginson, and Isaac Johnson and his wife, the Lady Arabella, who was, we are told, the sister of the Earl of Lincoln. Johnson was the richest of all the company, which contained a good many well-to-do men, and his loss was deeply felt.

Because of crowded conditions at Salem, and because, too, Winthrop thought it not the best place for the chief place of the colony, the newcomers had no sooner landed than they began to scatter. Some went to the peninsula called by the Indians Mishawum, but now renamed Charlestown, others to Shawmut, which was to become Boston, still others to make settlement at places they named Roxbury, Dorchester, Lynn and Watertown. It is with Charlestown, which was literally enough the mother-town of Winchester and of Woburn, Malden, Somerville, Everett, Medford, Burlington and Stoneham as well, that we are to concern ourselves.

The first settlement of Charlestown was in 1629, for in that year a number of those who had come over to Salem with the Rev. Mr. Higginson's party removed, with Governor Endicott's permission, to Mishawum, as Charlestown Neck was called by the Indians. Among them were the brothers Sprague, who were later the founders of Malden, and Thomas Graves. This Graves was an "engineer" of some reputation in England. It was his task to lay out the new settlement at Mishawum, to stake out building lots, determine where the streets should be, and superintend the building of houses, among them a "Great House" which was to be the

public building of the town. This Great House, which stood for many years, was in succession the dwelling place of Governor Winthrop, the courthouse and the first meetinghouse in Charlestown; and it declined at last to be the tavern or "ordinary" of the town. Already, it seems, the newcomers recognized the superior advantages of a location on Boston Bay and were preparing for an important, perhaps their most important settlement there.

So when Governor Winthrop and his following appeared in Charlestown in 1630 they found matters well advanced there. Among the Indians, of whom as Prince says "the neck was full,"¹ they found Sagamore John, the son of the Squaw Sachem and chief of the savages in this vicinity. He readily gave them permission to build their homes where they liked, and houses began to rise on every hand. It was not long however before fault was found with Charlestown as the permanent center of the colony. There was not land enough on the neck for a large company it was said, and there was complaint because water was not abundant. The largest spring was on the shore, often under salt water at high tide, and so brackish. The near-by peninsula of Shawmut was larger, better situated and "full of springs of living water." So the greater part of the Charlestown settlers, led by their governor, Winthrop, and their minister, Rev. John Wilson, passed over to Shawmut and established themselves there. The Governor took with him the timbered frame of the house he had begun to build for himself in Charlestown, and so passed the brief glory of the little village as the chief seat of the Puritan colony of Massachusetts Bay.

Only seventeen "heads of families" who had come in with Winthrop remained as permanent residents of Charlestown. This would mean a population of perhaps sixty or seventy persons; but to them must be added some at least of those who had lived there since Thomas Graves laid out the town in 1629. We have no list of them, and their number is uncertain. Among the seventeen were several whose names touch Winchester history nearly. These are Edward Converse, who was later to build the first house in Winchester — and by the same token the first house in the old town of Woburn — Ezekiel Richardson, one of the first settlers of our

¹ Prince, *New England's First Fruits*.

town, and Increase Nowell, the largest land holder in the first division of the land at "Waterfield." There were also Edward Gibbons and Captain Norton, whose names we have come across in following the litigation over the Squaw Sachem's land on the west side of Winchester. Increase Nowell was clearly the most important man in the town, the only one who, in the list preserved in the Charlestown records, bears the title of "Esquire." Edward Converse, it is interesting to note, was the first to establish a ferry between Charlestown and Boston, which he maintained for at least nine years. Within a few years other names which were to become familiar in Winchester history appear on the list of Charlestown citizens: Rev. Zechariah Symmes, who became in 1634 the first pastor of the Charlestown church, James Thompson, the ancestor of the family of that name in Woburn and Winchester, Rev. John Harvard, one of the original landowners in Waterfield, and Captain Edward Johnson who has been called the "father of the town of Woburn."¹

The government of the Massachusetts Bay Colony was at first in the hands of a governor and a body of Assistants, all of whom had been named by the company in England. But it was not long before the colonists, like good Englishmen as they were, insisted on having another "house" in the government, to be composed of representatives duly elected by the citizens of each of the towns, which were, by 1634, ten in number. These formed, with the Assistants, the "Great and General Court," a title which is still legally that of the Massachusetts legislature. One of the first duties of the Court was to set the bounds of the various towns, that none might encroach upon its neighbors. Charlestown was granted a wide extent of territory on the "main land"; to the northward it reached eight miles into the country, which means that nearly all of the present town of Winchester was included. The first appearance of our community in Massachusetts history, therefore, is as a part of the venerable town of Charlestown.

This region was of course still a shaggy wilderness, about which little was accurately known. Governor Winthrop and a party of companions had looked down upon it in 1631 when they had made a journey of exploration up into the Fells, discovered and

¹ Frothingham's History of Charlestown.

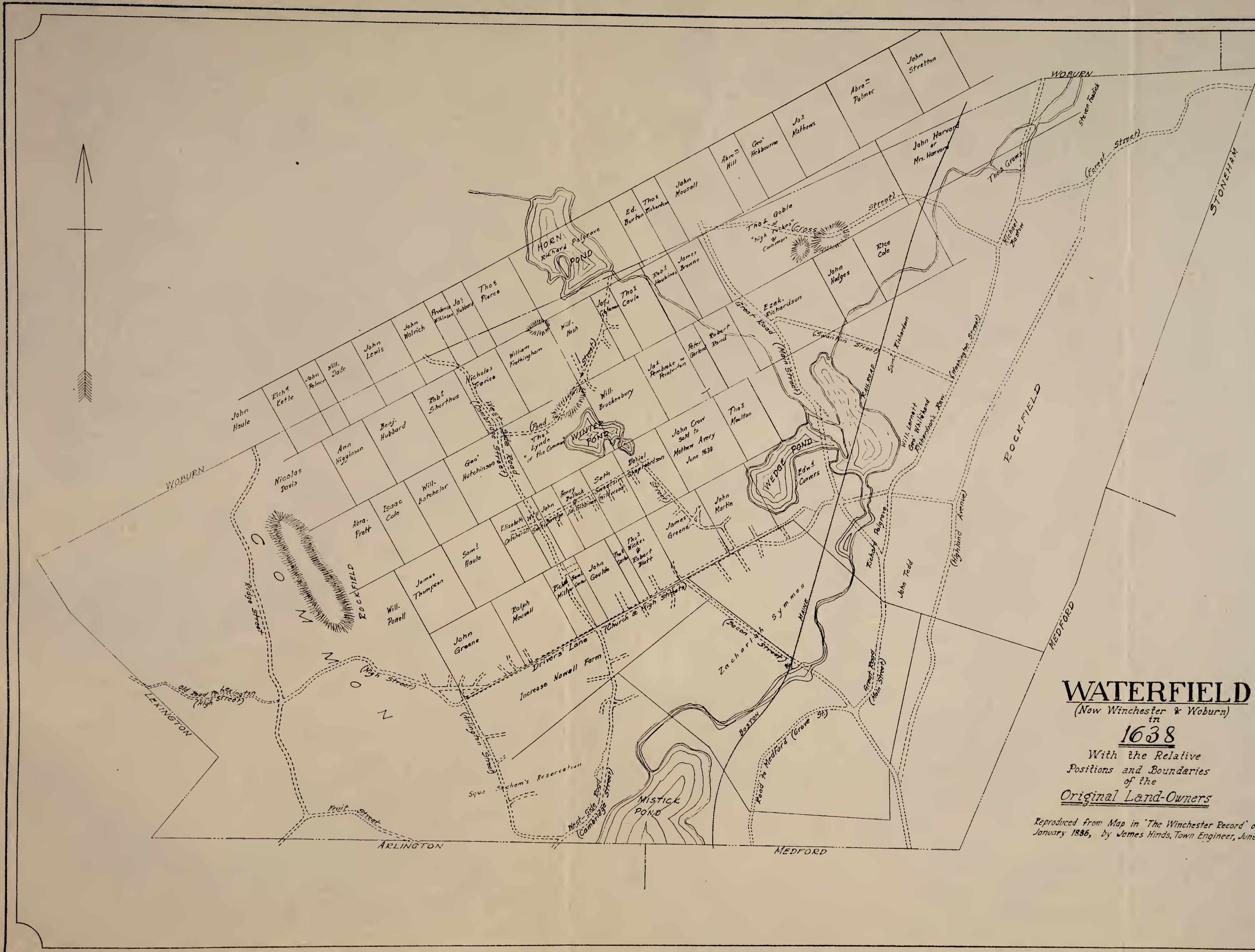
TAWNEY

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WATERFIELD

(Now Winchester & Woburn)

1638

With the Relative
Positions and Boundaries
of the

Original Land-Owners

Reproduced from Map in 'The Winchester Record' of
January 1886, by James Hinds, Town Engineer, June 1930.

THE ORIGINAL DIVISION OF WATERFIELD LOTS, 1638. (From a map prepared by Rev. George Cooke)

named Spot Pond, and lunched frugally on cheese without bread, on an eminence they named Cheese Rock, but which a more genteel generation subsequently renamed Bear Hill. No doubt Captain Edward Johnson, who had a permit to trade with the Indians at Pawtucket Falls (Lowell), passed through the Mystic Valley and up the Aberjona in the same year, on his way to his trading post. Otherwise little can have been known about it. It is to be noticed, however, that in the quaintly drawn map that accompanies Wood's "New England's Prospect," published in 1634, we find not only the Mystic Ponds but Horn Pond laid down. It is placed, however, not where it belongs but on the site of Spy Pond in Arlington, which indicates that although Horn Pond must have been seen and named (probably from its shape) very early, there was still in 1634 some confusion about its real situation.

In 1635, however, Charlestown took some real action to explore systematically its land to the northward. The town records inform us that in that year Edward Converse, William Brackenbury and Abraham Palmer were delegated to "go up into the country on discovery," for which they were to be "benefitted at the charge of the town."

These men must have brought back a pretty clear report of the geography of Waterfield (the present Winchester) for presently we find Charlestown granting land there to the citizens of the town. The "Book of Possessions" which was made up in 1638 contains allotments of all the land lying in the Winchester valley and some outside it, with the bounds carefully set forth. From it we learn that every freeman in Charlestown had his share, large or small. By far the largest "farms" were assigned to Increase Nowell, the chief magistrate of the town, and to Zechariah Symmes, the minister of the Church. These amounted to some three hundred acres each. Good-sized lots were granted to Captain Edward Johnson, Edward Converse, Rev. John Harvard, John Mousall and other prominent men in the community, and less generous ones to men of inferior importance.¹

¹ By a very thorough and useful piece of research, Rev. George Cooke, long a resident of Winchester and Secretary of the Winchester Historical Society in 1886, determined the location of all the Waterfield allotments recorded, and prepared a map which shows at a glance where each man's land was situated. It is reproduced herewith.

It must not be supposed that all these persons were expected to settle on the lots thus assigned to them. All of them still owned their two-acre lots on Charlestown neck, and most of them had other pieces of ground, often of good size, scattered about elsewhere. Increase Nowell had no less than ten such, one in Malden at least as large as his farm in Winchester. Rev. Mr. Symmes also had several grants within the original limits of Charlestown, and so had Converse, Johnson and others.

This portioning out of the land of the infant town was a sort of division among the citizens of the only wealth available, so that each might have his share. The significant word "dividends" was often used to describe the grants. It was expected that many would realize on some or all of their lots, by selling them to those who intended to settle in the neighborhood or to newcomers. Only a few, therefore, of the original land owners in Waterfield became permanent residents. That saintly young man Rev. John Harvard died shortly after he had received his portion, leaving behind him a name that has gone abroad through the earth more widely than that of any of his fellow citizens. Increase Nowell never lived on his allotment, though he kept possession of it until his death, and may have had a part of it cultivated for him, since he always spoke of it as his "farm." But on the other hand, the families of Edward Converse, Ezekiel Richardson, Rev. Zechariah Symmes, Captain Edward Johnson and many more did make their dwelling places here and became the pioneers of civilization and religion in this "shaggy wilderness."

In 1640 Charlestown, finding that its population increased apace, and desiring more land for occupation by its people, petitioned the General Court for the addition to its boundaries of two miles square beyond the limits of Waterfield. On May 24 the Court granted the petition, provided the land asked for did not fall within the bounds of Lynn Village (Reading) and was built upon within two years. And at the October session of the Court the grant was increased to four miles square.

No sooner was the ink dry on the order of the General Court than Charlestown sent forth a party of leading citizens, including the Rev. Mr. Symmes, Increase Nowell, Edward Johnson, Edward Converse, Ezekiel Richardson and several more to "search out the

land" newly added to the town. Somewhat later another company, including Johnson and Converse,¹ went out to view the bounds between the new grant and Lynn Village. Both expeditions must have had a rough time of it forcing their way through the as yet trackless forests and swamps. To add to the discomfort of the second party, we learn from the Woburn Records that it "poured down rain all night incessantly." The bedraggled Puritans were, however, shown one conspicuous evidence of the watchfulness of Providence over them. "Some of the company lying under the body of a great tree . . . when daylight appeared, no sooner was the last man come from under it, but it fell down to their amazement; being forced to dig out their food that was caught under it; it being so ponderous, all the strength they had could not move it."²

The man who recorded this providential escape from death was Captain Edward Johnson, first Recorder or Town Clerk of Woburn and so conspicuous in its early history that he has been called the "father" of the town. He was never a resident of Winchester, though he lived not far from our borders, near the four corners at the foot of Shaker Glen where the highway to Lowell crosses the Woburn-Lexington road;³ and he cuts so great a figure in the early history of Woburn, of which much of Winchester was then a part, that he merits a word or two in respect to his memory.

He came to America from Canterbury in Kent, the ancient city which was also the English home of the Rev. Zechariah Symmes. He must have seen military service in his youth, for he brought the title of Captain with him, and is spoken of in early records as the "Kentish soldier." He was of the great emigration that came over with Governor Winthrop, but he seems to have had commercial rather than religious motives for the voyage, for we soon hear of him carrying on trade for furs with the Indians. In 1631 he went back to England, but five years later he returned to Charlestown, bringing his family with him. He had apparently experi-

¹ So in the Woburn Records, but there is on record an affidavit of Converse's, sworn to in the suit mentioned on page 54, to the effect that he did not accompany the party.

² Woburn Records, I, 3.

³ Captain Johnson's distinguished son, Major William, was in fact a resident of Winchester. His house stood on Cambridge Street not far above Wildwood Street, where the Edward Russell house now stands.

enced conversion, for he came back a zealous Puritan, and became at once a leading figure both in church and town.

Johnson was more literate — at least more ambitiously literate — than most of his fellow citizens outside the clergy. He loved to write. The Woburn Records, which as Town Clerk he kept for many years, are delightfully informal, personal and voluminous, and they are introduced with a long piece of verse — charity itself could hardly call it poetry — celebrating the aims, the hopes, and the sufferings of the first settlers. He was also the author of the “Wonder-working Providence,” a history of the Massachusetts Bay Colony up to 1651. This book is invaluable as an historical source and it is quaintly if rather grandiloquently written. It is full also of doctrinal or pious passages which sometimes interrupt seriously the thread of history, and is embellished moreover with numerous examples of Johnson’s versification; he evidently fancied himself as a poet. An interesting, self-revealing, sturdy, capable old Puritan was Edward Johnson. Peace to his ashes.

To return to our story: it was not the original intention to set up a new town on the land granted to Charlestown by the General Court. The soil was to be portioned out to Charlestown residents, present or future, and a village, which should still be part of the mother-town, was expected to be established there. It was to be called Charlestown Village, as Reading was originally called Lynn Village, and the new settlement did actually bear that name for two years.

But even before the first house had risen there, a movement was begun to create a new town in place of a mere village, tributary to Charlestown. On November 9, 1640 the church of Charlestown — not the town, observe — chose seven commissioners, Edward Converse, Edward Johnson, Thomas Graves, John Mousall and the three Richardson brothers, Ezekiel, Thomas and Samuel, “for the erecting of a new church and town.” It was felt, no doubt, that the settlers of Charlestown Village would live too far distant from the Neck to enjoy the church privileges to which every good Puritan should be entitled; and that they ought accordingly to have a church of their own.

The town seems not to have resented this apparent intrusion of the church into secular affairs; as a matter of fact in 1640 church



DOGWOOD IN THE MIDDLESEX FELS

and town were interchangeable terms, consisting as they did of the same persons under different titles. At all events the town offered no opposition to the idea; but when on November 23 a church meeting was called to see who would volunteer to go out into the wilderness to form the new church and town, so many came forward that the church officers were inclined to abandon the plan, lest Charlestown should be depopulated.¹ This was an unexpected turn of events; but by some means or other the fears of the objectors were soon calmed, and the commissioners were authorized to proceed according to the original vote.

Followed a meeting of humiliation and prayer at the house of John Mousall, to seek God's blessing on the new enterprise, and several subsequent meetings to discuss ways and means and enroll suitable persons — suitable financially, theologically and physically — to undertake the work.

By February 10, 1641 (O.S.) they were so far advanced in their plans that we find a party of men at work building a bridge across the Aberjona, in order that there might be easier access to the proposed town. The weather it seems was extremely cold, and the frost-bitten bridge builders commemorated their sufferings by naming the structure "Cold Bridge," a name it bore for many years. This bridge was on the very spot where the handsome concrete Converse Bridge now spans the stream at Winchester center. The Woburn Records describe it as "over against Edward Converse's house,"² which is excellent evidence that Mr. Converse had already built there or did so immediately afterward. In either event his was the first house to be built in Winchester and in the old town of Woburn as well. It stood a few rods from the river on the easterly side of the highway, near the present corner of Main Street and Converse Place, and it was almost two hundred years before it disappeared to make way for a more modern building.

Meanwhile the question of a site for the new church and village center was under debate. The first plan was to place them on the eastern side of the town near the Aberjona River in the district now called Montvale. Here some forty men who intended to settle in the new town met on February 16, 1641, and set about

¹ Woburn Records, I, 4.

² Woburn Records, I, 4.

“marking trees and laying bridges,”¹ but, say the Records written by Edward Johnson, “the way was so plain backward that divers never went forward again.” Thus cryptically does Johnson refer to a difference of opinion that had already arisen among the seven commissioners and soon spread to the body of the settlers.

Four of the seven commissioners, Thomas Graves and the three Richardson brothers, having lots granted them in Waterfield on the eastern edge of the tract, naturally wished the village to be set conveniently to their land. The other three, Johnson, Converse and Mousall, objected. They insisted that the village should be placed on higher and more fertile land nearer the geographical center of the town. A majority of the settlers seem to have agreed with them, and the difference became so warm that a committee of leading Charlestown men, including Mr. Nowell, Captain Sedgwick and Lieutenant Sprague, had to be called in to give advice. In the end, Johnson, Converse and Mousall carried their point, we know not exactly how; and it was settled that the meetinghouse — and therefore the village — should be built in the spot where Woburn center stands today.

Whether or not it was from chagrin at the decision or for some other reason, Thomas Graves shortly afterward withdrew from the enterprise and returned to Charlestown. This man, though having the same name, must not be confused with the engineer who originally laid out the streets and public places of Charlestown. He was by profession a ship captain, and within a few years of his return to Charlestown he returned to the sea. After the execution of King Charles and the establishment of the government by Parliament he entered the service of that government and we hear of him as commander, first of the frigate *President* and then of the *St. Andrew*, a sizable warship of fifty-seven guns. He won distinction in the naval war that Oliver Cromwell found it necessary to carry on with Holland, and was killed in an engagement with a Dutch frigate in 1653. A lively tradition among Charlestown people refers to him as the “Rear Admiral”; but if, as the tradition declares, Cromwell honored him with this rank it must have been posthumously. He died a captain. His land in Winchester was near the corner of Washington and Forest Streets, adjacent to that of the Rev. John Harvard, which he bought after Harvard’s death.

¹ Sewall’s History of Woburn, page 15.

Within little more than a year from the determination of the site of Woburn Village, sufficient progress had been made in clearing land and erecting houses to justify the forming of a church organization. The seven men who were its first members, were Edward Johnson, John Mousall, William Learned, Edward Converse, Ezekiel, Thomas and Samuel Richardson — the last four all residents within the present bounds of Winchester. The occasion was one of great solemnity. President Dunster of Harvard College, nine eminent clergymen including John Wilson and John Cotton of Boston, John Eliot of Roxbury, Richard Mather of Dorchester and Zechariah Symmes of Charlestown, and Mr. Increase Nowell were present. Mr. Symmes “continued in prayer and preaching about the space of five hours,”¹ which probably tried his hearers less than it would their descendants — and then the seven men mentioned above “stood forth and made declaration of their religious faith and Christian experience.” The covenant was then read and agreed to, the right hand of fellowship was extended by the elders of the visiting churches and the ceremony was at last ended.

The church having been “gathered,” Mr. Thomas Carter, “recently from England,” was called to be its minister, and ordained on December 2. A few weeks earlier the General Court had voted to incorporate the new town under the name of Woburn — or Wooborne, as the spelling then was. Why this name was chosen is not entirely clear. Sewall, the historian of the town, suggests that it was “from respect to the Hon. Richard Russell, a man of consequence in Charlestown, and highly regarded in the Colony, of which he was for thirty years the Treasurer.” He was, it seems, connected with the noble family of Russells, who were Dukes of Bedford and whose chief country seat was at Woburn Abbey. A more likely theory is that of Mr. William R. Cutter, who thinks the compliment was paid to Captain Thomas Sedgwick, long a leading citizen of Charlestown and a close friend of Edward Johnson, who often spoke of him with admiration in his writings.¹ Captain Sedgwick was a native of Woburn in England. What more natural than that his friend, having a new town to name, should

¹ Wonder Working Providence, XXII.

¹ Article “Woburn” by Cutter in The History of Middlesex County.

please the gallant captain by calling it Woburn? This may or may not be the true explanation; it is, however, the most plausible that has been suggested.

In this manner, then, was Woburn, twelfth town of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, settled and set on its course, containing within itself the greatest part of what was to become, two centuries later, the town of Winchester.

CHAPTER III

THE CONVERSE AND RICHARDSON FAMILIES

EDWARD CONVERSE built his house, as we have seen, "over against" the Cold Bridge across the Aberjona in the fall of 1640 or the spring of 1641. For nearly two centuries thereafter the region called Waterfield, which was eventually to become the town of Winchester, remained a quiet community of farms, lying midway between the slowly growing villages of Woburn and Medford. It had no church for quite two hundred years, no schoolhouse or "general store" for one hundred and fifty. There were, here and there, the gristmills essential to a farming community in the early days, a rural sawmill or two, and, as we shall see later, there were by the eighteenth century the humble beginnings of a shoe and leather industry already under way in this part of the town. But it was as a wide area of farm and forest land, with a few houses scattered about upon it, that we must picture our town for many years after the first house was built within its borders.

The district continued to be called Waterfield for a long time. Deeds are in existence dated late in the seventeenth century which describe the land conveyed as "lying in Waterfield." The name gradually passed out of use, however, perhaps because the region did not even have the unity of being a part of a single town. Until its incorporation as Winchester in 1850, the old "Waterfield" lay always in two, and most of the time in three, distinct towns. When Woburn was formed, the boundary between it and the mother town of Charlestown followed in general the line of High and Church streets down as far as School Street. Then it turned southeasterly, crossed the Aberjona, intersected Main Street near Prospect Street and ran up the hill into the "rock-field" of the Fells. All south and east of that line remained in Charlestown. Before many years Medford was formed into a separate town, and so much of the present Winchester as lay east of the Mystic Lakes became Medford territory. But the land west of the lakes and

south of the Woburn line still belonged to Charlestown until well into the nineteenth century, and was always known as "Charlestown End."

The greater part of the ancient Waterfield quite soon became divided between not more than ten or a dozen families; the majority of the sixty or more grantees of 1638 having sold their plots of land to those who decided to settle permanently there. There were



THE EDWARD CONVERSE HOUSE

five families in particular — the Converses, the Symmeses, the Richardsons, the Gardners and Johnsons — who not only came to own most of the Waterfield land, but remained for more than two centuries conspicuous in the history of the region, and have not a few descendants still living in the Winchester of 1936. Something should be said about each of these families, preëminent as they are among the founders of our community.

Edward Converse was a native of Northamptonshire in England. His family is said to have been of French origin, and ambitious genealogists have traced his line to Roger de Coigneries, a knight who "came over" with William the Conqueror in 1066 and

was made hereditary constable of Durham Castle by that sovereign.¹ Edward Converse was born in 1590. He was a Puritan from his youth, and a member of John Winthrop's company, which crossed to New England in 1630. We have already heard of him in Charlestown, where he was a leading citizen and the first to conduct a ferry between that town and Boston. We have heard of him too as a leader in the establishment of the new town of Woburn, where he became, with Captain Edward Johnson, the most influential of its citizens. He was one of the two first deacons of the Woburn church, John Mousall being the other; he was a magistrate, empowered to try "small causes"; he represented Woburn in the General Court, and for nineteen successive years, until his death in 1663, he was elected a selectman of the town.

This man, solid, substantial, enterprising, unafraid, had no sooner settled himself in his new home than he determined to take advantage of the little river that ran by his house to set up a grist mill for the convenience of the neighbors he hoped to have. He built a dam across the Aberjona a little below the present Converse Bridge, and the mill pond so formed remains today after nearly three centuries, an historic and beautiful feature of Winchester's center. During the greater part of those three hundred years his dam stood and furnished power for a mill of some kind. Not until the last holder of the privilege, Mr. Arthur E. Whitney, sold the property to the town for park purposes in 1909 was the water wheel stilled forever.

Converse was of course farmer as well as miller. His land abutted on the south that granted to Zechariah Symmes, the minister of Charlestown. It included all the present town center, and came by purchase to extend some distance northward up Main and Washington streets and on the west side too, in the direction of Winter Pond. The land along lower Mt. Vernon Street including the site of the Town Hall was, by tradition, his sheep pasture; the town common was part of his cornfield. Beside his house, and in course of time overshadowing it with its widespread branches, stood a famous elm tree. This tree stood until age and a crack in its trunk, which made it dangerous, obliged its removal in 1841. A loyal historian of Winchester celebrates it as the largest elm in

¹ Henry D. Lord in Winchester Record, I, 208; Stearns History of Rindge, N. H.

New England and asserts that it was no less than thirty-five feet in circumference.¹ Whether it was really so much larger than the great elm at Lancaster may be doubted, but it was beyond question a magnificent tree. It must have been well-grown when Edward Converse planted his house beside it, for less than fifty years thereafter, old Judge Samuel Sewall mentions it in his diary and tells of breaking a journey from Woburn to Boston to sit beneath its shade and enjoy a leisurely talk with Edward's son, Lieutenant James Converse.

Toward the end of a busy and honorable life, Converse got himself into trouble with the king's officers in Boston by reason of his stanch Puritanism. In 1662 Charles II, having recently been restored to the throne, despatched to his "loyal colony" of Massachusetts Bay a letter, meant to be gracious in tone but demanding two things the Puritans were by no means ready to grant. One was that "all persons of honest life and good conversation" should be admitted to take communion in the churches, according to the Book of Common Prayer. The other was that all persons of good character and sufficient property should be permitted to vote at all elections in the colony. These requirements seem reasonable enough today; but the Puritans who had established a church open only to those who held their particular doctrines, and a state the voters in which must be members of that church, did not think so. The king's letter was received with consternation. Isaac Cole, a Woburn constable, refused to post it publicly, as was his duty, and was arraigned in Court for his refusal. Converse, still a deacon in the church and a selectman of the town, was accused of having "spoken disrespectfully" of the letter, calling it "mere popery," and he too was arrested and brought into court.

A trial was held, but neither Cole nor Converse was convicted. The judges found that Converse's language was not disrespectful, and discharged him without having to pay the costs of his trial. This is good evidence that whatever the old Puritan said, the magistrates, who shared his opinions, thought well said, and that they were determined he should not suffer for it.

Edward Converse died in 1663, well past seventy. His will

¹ Winchester Record, Vol. I, page 56, article by O. R. Clark, who measured the tree himself.

and the appraisal of his estate are still to be found in the Middlesex records. The inventory is especially interesting as showing the careful value attached, in that day of small things, to even the most trivial — as we should think — of household possessions. It is too long to be reproduced here in full,¹ but these items are characteristic:

Quishions (cushions)	5 shillings
Handkerchiefs	7 shillings
A frying-pan	3 shillings 6 pence
Nailes	2 shillings 6 pence
A hat and a pair of mittings	5 shillings
One fire shovel and tongs	4 shillings
Four spoons	1 pound 10 shillings
Two sieves	2 shillings sixpence
1 lanthorn (lantern)	1 shilling 5 pence

And so on. One can tell from this list exactly what the house and outbuildings of a prosperous colonist of 1660 contained — for Edward Converse was prosperous as things went then. The value of his estate added up to 827 pounds 5 shillings and 6 pence, an amount of which \$25,000 would hardly be the equivalent today.

He left three sons and several daughters. His sons all continued to live on the land bequeathed them in his will. Josiah, the eldest, owned a house built for him by his father, which stood on what is now Church Street, near the northerly corner of Church and Main streets. Josiah followed in his father's footsteps; he was a deacon, a selectman, the chairman of the first board of "tithing men" (whose duty it was in those days of moral if not of economic regimentation to "have oversight of their neighbors and see that they have good order in their business"), and was otherwise a good and responsible citizen.

The cross that the worthy Josiah had to bear was the temporary stigma cast upon him of being nothing more nor less than a horse thief. His accuser was Edward Collins, a well-to-do inhabitant of Medford, who bought and lived in the Governor Craddock house there after Craddock's death in England. Collins declared that Josiah had sent one James Thompson to take out of his field

¹ Those who are interested can find the entire inventory in the Winchester Record, Vol. II, page 58.

a mare and a colt belonging to Collins. He produced witnesses who swore to the identity of the animals, two of his own serving men and two others who had owned the mare before it was sold to Collins. One of them, Markham by name, testified that he knew the mare well and had branded her with an M while he owned her. The mare's tail, mane and ears had been cropped, he said, since he saw her last but there was no mistaking her. To the charge of stealing the horse there was thus added the implication that Converse had tried to cover up his offense by mutilating his booty.

Converse of course denied all charges and brought witnesses in his defence; one of them was his nephew James, of whom more will be heard later. They swore that the mare and colt were known to be Converse's property, that there was no mark of a brand on her and that she was a good two years younger than Collins admitted his horse to be. The jury, however, found for the plaintiff. Josiah had to return the mare and her colt to Collins and pay the costs of the suit.

But, having got the mare, Collins could not keep her. She persisted in running away and returning to the Converse barn or pasture. Six months after the first trial — in December 1670 — we find that Deacon Converse (as he was soon to be) had got the case reviewed. A number of new witnesses appeared — among them our old friend Thomas Gleason of the Squaw Sachem farm. They were all certain the mare was not the one Collins had owned; there was no brand on her, they had inspected her teeth and found her younger by two years than the Collins mare — and there was the testimony given by the animal herself, who simply would not acknowledge the Collins farm to be her home. The jury, attending to all these things, reversed the first decision and gave back to the relieved Josiah his mare and his reputation.

The Converse gristmill was left by the father Edward to be owned jointly by his oldest son Josiah and his youngest son Samuel, to go in the end to the "longest liver;" while Samuel was bequeathed the old house by the Aberjona. But only six years after his father's death, Samuel met his own end through a shocking accident. The coroner's inquest found that he was "cutting ice from off the water-wheel of the corn mill, and over-reaching with his axe, was caught by his coat with some part of the wheel . . . whereby his head was

drawn down till it was sucked in between the water-wall and the water wheel." He cried out to stop the wheel, but it was too late. His head and chest were crushed; he died within half an hour; it was February 20, 1669.

The second son, James, lived in a house he built on Church Street as it now is, just north of the old Prince School lot.¹ This man was always called Lieutenant James, from the rank he held for some thirty years in the Woburn militia company. He saw some military service in King Philip's War and was often elected a deputy from Woburn to the General Court. He lived to a great age, as many of his family did in after years; he was ninety-five when he died in 1715.

His son, Major James, was even more distinguished. Major James lived in a house that stood to the east of Winter Pond, probably where Wildwood Street now runs. He was again and again elected to the General Court and was once Speaker of the House; but his chief fame came from his defence of the garrison at Wells, Maine, from an attack by Indians. This occurred in 1692, during one of those frequent frontier struggles with the Frenchmen from Canada which disturbed New England history for a century, and ended only with the conquest of Canada by General Wolfe in 1759. This particular war was called King William's War; it was waged along the frontier in Maine. James Converse, then a captain of militia, was sent northward in 1690 to command the little garrison at Wells. After a year or two of fighting, the Indians, who, with French encouragement, had dug up the hatchet, agreed to make peace and promised to deliver some thirty Englishmen, whom they had taken prisoners, to the Storer garrison house where Converse commanded. A party of officials from Boston, headed by the deputy governor of the colony, Danforth, proceeded to Wells to receive the prisoners and conclude a final peace.

But the Indians, persuaded, they afterward declared, by the French, broke their agreement. Only six prisoners were returned, and the Indian chiefs themselves did not appear as they had promised. Instead, some two hundred Indians made a sudden attack on the garrison house on June 9, 1691. Captain Converse was ready

¹ For the location of the Converse houses, see a letter by A. C. Vinton, Esq., printed in W. R. Cutter's rare book, *Historic Sites of Old Woburn*.

for them for, having suspected treachery, he had sent for reinforcements, and got thirty-five men with plenty of ammunition from Essex County. The Indians were beaten off, but their chieftain, Madockawando, by no means accepted defeat, and boasted, as Cotton Mather informs us, that he would come back next year and "have that dog, Converse, out of his hole."¹

He was as good as his word in the matter of coming back, for a year and a day from the date of the first attack some four hundred yelling savages appeared before the little garrison house, this time led by a French officer, Labocree by name. Mather has left us a delightfully spirited account of the fight that followed. Converse had only fifteen soldiers with him in the garrison, to which a number of settlers from the neighborhood had fled for shelter. There were as many men aboard three little vessels lying in the river, lately arrived from Boston with ammunition and supplies.

The Indians attacked in full force, but Captain Converse's two or three small cannon were too much for them. They then turned their attention to the sloops in the river, and tried in every way, by shooting "fire-arrows" and sending blazing rafts adrift, to set them on fire. But they had no luck; their rafts drifted ashore instead of against the sloops, and the men on board put out whatever flames the arrows started. The Indians then attacked the garrison again, and they were so many that some of the garrison suggested surrender; to which Captain Converse replied that he would "lay the man dead who should so much as mutter that base word again." The second attack failed like the first; Converse's cannon were so well served that the Indians were mowed down in great numbers and Labocree, the Frenchman, was slain.

The redskins next tried what taunting the colonial captain with cowardice would do. They dared him to come out and fight in the open field. Converse told them he would be a fool to bring out thirty men to fight three hundred, but offered to fight thirty to thirty if the rest of the Indians would keep out of it. To which, as Mather reports, Madockawando made the following delicious reply: "Nay, mee own; English fashion all one fool, You kill mee, mee kill you? No; better lie somewhere, and shoot a man when he no see; that the best soldier."²

¹ Mather, *Decennium Luctuosum*, in his *Magnalia*.

² Mather, *Decennium Luctuosum*, in his *Magnalia*.

But there was no chance of that kind of fighting; and the Indians, discouraged, as the savages usually were by the failure of their surprise attack, presently went off whooping and yelling, taking with them one unfortunate white man whom they had captured and meant, no doubt, to kill by torture.

This episode made a great noise in the colony of Massachusetts Bay. James Converse was made a major and given command of all Massachusetts troops in the district of Maine. When at last peace was made with the Indians, he was one of the commissioners to sign the treaty, at Casco Bay. This sturdy son of Winchester died four years before his father at the early age — for a Converse — of sixty-one years, leaving behind him a highly honored name.

Some members of the Converse family remained on the family land until the nineteenth century came in. Benjamin, the last of the name in this town, died in 1824, and his house, which stood near the northern end of Rangeley, was sold to Ebenezer Parker, whose name twenty-five years later was to head the petition for the incorporation of Winchester.

The land in the northeastern part of Winchester, including the Highlands, was all occupied from the first settlement of ancient Woburn by the three brothers Richardson — Ezekiel, Samuel and Thomas. Ezekiel, the eldest, was the only one of the three to come to New England with the emigration of 1630; he was one of the first board of selectmen elected in Charlestown in 1634. His brothers followed him thither, probably in 1636, for in the following year we find all three named among the “freemen” of the colony. Though comparatively young men, the Richardsons were of importance from the first. All three were named among the commissioners from the Charlestown church to serve in setting up a new church and town in Woburn. They were settled by 1642 on adjoining farms in Winchester. Ezekiel’s house was near the corner of Cross and Washington streets, about where the Second Congregational Church now stands; his land stretched westward toward the “high rocks,” as the elevation south of Cross Street was called. Samuel lived nearer the present center of Winchester, near the corner of Stone Avenue, but on the west side of Richardson’s Row. Thomas’s house was on the east side of the Row near the corner of

Fairmount Street, where the old John S. Richardson house stands today.¹

The brothers all raised large families, as did many of the descendants. One town was by no means large enough to hold them all, and they spilled over into old Woburn, Stoneham, Chelmsford, Dracut and Sutton, Massachusetts, and thence scattered widely over the country from Maine to the Mississippi Valley. But a surprising number of them remained loyal to the original home of the family. At one time there were eight Richardson families living along the country road that in after years became Washington Street, and that road was naturally and appropriately known as Richardson's Row. The name was preserved until the town of Woburn, some hundred years ago, saw fit to name it in commemoration of the Father of his Country rather than in memory of the Fathers of the town. But long afterward the street was still Richardson's Row in the mouths of Winchester people.

Ezekiel's descendants have been less numerous in the town than those of the two younger brothers; most of his sons went early to the founding of Chelmsford and Dracut. It is worth noticing, however, that his daughter Phebe married Henry Baldwin of Woburn, and became the ancestress of a notable family, including Loammi Baldwin, the distinguished soldier and engineer, whose statute stands today before the beautiful mansion house of his family in North Woburn, one of the oldest and finest examples of colonial architecture in Massachusetts.

Ezekiel was in his early years in Charlestown something of a partisan of Mistress Anne Hutchinson, that brilliant woman whose "heretical" views concerning the "inner light" and the unimportance of good works and righteous conduct in the absence of a mystical reliance on the grace of God, stirred up such a commotion among the Puritans, clergy and laity alike. He was a signer of the petition protesting against the severity of the clergy toward Rev. John Wheelwright, Mrs. Hutchinson's friend and co-believer, and in consequence got himself into serious trouble, for after the banishment of Wheelwright and Mrs. Hutchinson, the ministers and magistrates proceeded vigorously against the signers of the petition. Several were exiled or warned to leave the colony and others

¹ W. R. Cutter, *Historic Sites of Old Woburn*.

were disfranchised. Ezekiel Richardson, less conspicuous than these, succeeded in making his peace, returned to orthodoxy, and was not further troubled.

Ezekiel Richardson died in 1648, still a comparatively young man. His widow, Susannah, married, not long afterward, Henry Brooks, whose house stood just outside the limits of present-day Winchester, near the corner of Main Street and Lake Avenue, Woburn, and much of whose farm lay within our Winchester boundaries. This worthy and capable woman, Goodwife Brooks, was widely known in her day for her skill as a nurse, and especially for her success in restoring to life and health a young Indian girl who had been scalped and tomahawked. The case was this:

During the summer of 1670 a party of inoffensive Indians who lived in this vicinity were set upon, not far from Chelmsford, by a band of savage Mohawks who had travelled in their war paint all the way from their homes in central New York, and laid an ambush into which these local redskins had the misfortune to fall. Most of the party were killed; this young girl of whom I speak was left for dead, her skull crushed in by a tomahawk and her scalp removed. After the Mohawks had gone, a few of her friends who had escaped returned and found her still breathing. They carried her to the nearest white settlement, whence she was brought to Woburn for Goodwife Brooks to exercise her skill upon her.

The girl lived in the Brooks house four years, gradually mending in health and strength. Mrs. Brooks attended her with unfailing care and devotion. She removed a number of pieces of bone imbedded in the girl's brain and had the satisfaction of seeing the scalp close over the gaping wound. In the end the girl recovered completely; the hair, however, never grew upon the spot from which the Mohawks had torn the skin.

When the delicacy of such a case is considered, the constant danger of infection and the necessity of treatment that can fairly be called surgical, it must be admitted that this frontier Puritan woman, without instruments, antiseptics or medical training, acquitted herself nobly.¹

It was at the house of the second Samuel Richardson, son of the founder Samuel, that the Indian massacre of 1676 occurred,

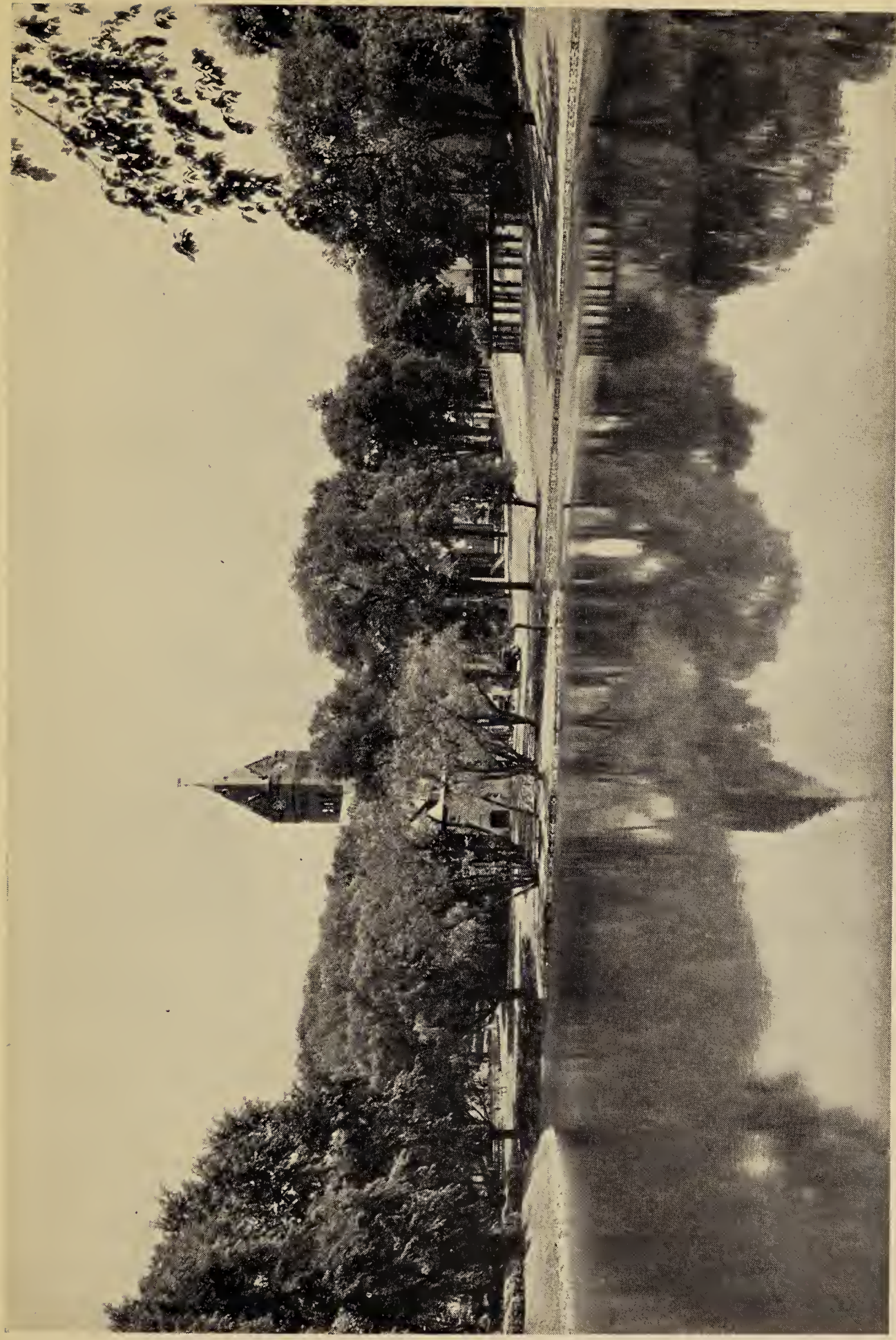
¹ See W. R. Cutter, *Historic Sites of Old Woburn*, page 13.

the only episode of its kind in the history of our town. It was at the time of King Philip's War, when the savages made their last futile stand against the steady advance of the white man's settlements in eastern and southern Massachusetts. Samuel Richardson had borne arms in that war, but at the time of the massacre, April 10, 1676, he was at home preparing his fields for the spring sowing. His house stood on the present Washington Street, not far from the corner of Irving Street. A little north of it was a house that had been prepared for a garrison house, in case the infant settlement should be threatened by Indian attack.

The Indians appeared, however, silently and without warning. There were only three or four of them; they were no part of Philip's war parties, but merely wandering redskins, excited by the news that their brethren to the south and west were on the warpath. They broke into the Richardson house, where the wife lay in bed with a lately born infant. A nurse who was caring for her, and a child of five, were the only others in the house. The savages tomahawked mother and child at once. The nurse, who had snatched up the infant when the Indians appeared, ran out at the back door and tried to reach the garrison house across the fields. But the Indians were immediately in hot pursuit, and finding that they were gaining on her, she saved her own life by dropping the baby, whom the Indians killed as they had its mother and brother. Then they vanished as silently as they had come.

Samuel Richardson was working in a field not far from his house, having with him a twin brother of the child who had been murdered. Looking toward the house he "saw feathers flying about"—the Indians had ripped open the bed on which the mother lay—and, as we are told, "other tokens of mischief."¹ He hurried home, but he was too late. The savages had gone, leaving the dead behind them. Mr. Richardson at once called together a party of neighbors—mostly relatives it is safe to say—and set off in chase of the Indians who had escaped into the rough country of the Fells. As night came on they saw three redmen seated upon a rock. They fired at them, and the Indians took flight. The white men were not rash enough to follow them in the darkness, but returning next day they found the dead body of an Indian not far from the rock.

¹ Richardson Memorial, page 187; Sewall's History of Woburn, page 118.



THE TOWN HALL ACROSS THE CONVERSE MILL POND

The massacre created a deep impression in the little settlement, the more because a year or two before an Indian, probably drunk, had killed a woman living in that part of Woburn that is now Burlington, of whom he had begged a drink of cider. But the uneasiness was unnecessary. There were no more Indian outrages in this vicinity even during the prolonged French and Indian wars that kept so much of New England alarmed during the first part of the eighteenth century.

Another Richardson whose exploits have come down to us was Zechariah, the grandson of Samuel of the massacre. It was in 1740 that Zechariah, then a young fellow of twenty, was ploughing some land near the river bank when he was set upon by a bear, who had, it was supposed, come down from Horn Pond Mountain to slake his thirst in the Aberjona. The bear was a large and savage beast; the man had no weapon but his heavy goad stick with which to defend himself. But with that he fetched the on-coming bear such a blow upon the skull as to stun him; and before the animal could get his wits together the determined Zechariah had cracked his head in earnest with repeated applications of the goad, and literally beaten his numbed brains out of his skull.¹

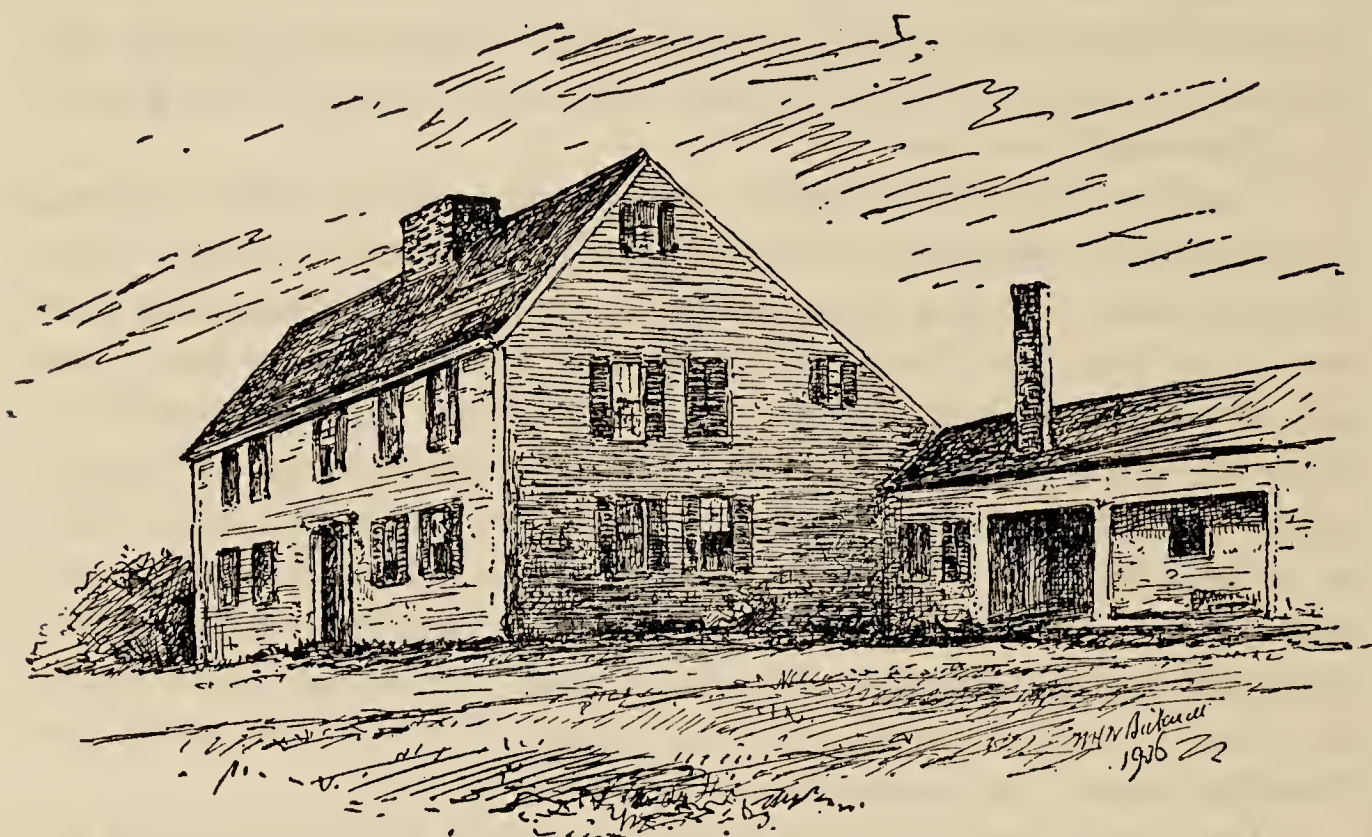
The Converses built the first gristmill in Winchester, but the Richardsons built the first sawmill. This was set up toward the end of the seventeenth century by the second generation of the family. It stood upon what was long called Sawmill Brook, a stream that flowed down from the marshy meadow where the town's North Reservoir now sparkles in the sun. The brook crossed Forest Street — or the Stoneham road — where travellers had to ford it, and discharged its waters, which in winter and spring were considerable, into the Aberjona. Since the "Long Meadow" was turned into a reservoir, the brook has of course disappeared.² But it served for many years to operate the old Richardson mill and turn out quantities of rough lumber that went into the frames of many a house and barn in the growing village.

There ought somewhere to be recorded the sad story of Tufts Richardson, a descendant of Ezekiel, who met his end by drowning himself in the Aberjona on November 16, 1826. Hardly six months

¹ This surprising incident is recorded by N. A. Richardson in one of the articles of reminiscence preserved in his scrap book.

² Except at such times as the North Reservoir overflows.

before, the young man had taken unto himself a wife with whom, however, he seems to have lived unhappily. We have it on the authority of his kinsman, Nathaniel A. Richardson, who was a small boy when the suicide occurred, that its cause was this: Tufts'



THE JEDUTHAN RICHARDSON HOUSE

wife Mary had baked a number of loaves of brown bread, some of which turned sour before they were eaten. The young wife told her husband he must eat them up before any more loaves were baked. He refused; she insisted. In the end rather than eat the sour bread the harassed husband went out and threw himself into the river — perhaps the only case where a man carried his criticism of his bride's cooking to so desperate a length.¹

I have spoken of the Richardsons as a prolific race. Perhaps the most striking example of their fertility was given by Deacon Jeduthan Richardson, himself, oddly enough, an only child. He was born in 1738, and he was a leading citizen of his day, often a selectman of Woburn, deacon of the old First Parish church, a large landowner, a good farmer, and a man looked up to and respected by his neighbors. It was Deacon Jeduthan who created the "island" in the Aberjona near the Woburn line; for he got per-

¹ N. A. Richardson in *Winchester Star*, October 8, 1900.

mission from the legislature to dig a canal to divert the waters of the river and get better power for a grist-mill which he built and operated. It was on the spot where Mr. Winn's watch hand factory stands today (1936). Jeduthan Richardson's house stood close by.

The good deacon was the father of eleven children and the grandfather of seventy-six. Nor was that all. His posterity continued to increase until, when a very famous reunion of his descendants was held in 1868 at the old house, then occupied by his grandson, Deacon Luther Richardson, there were three hundred and fifty persons present, and a roster of his living descendants prepared for the occasion showed some six hundred names. There are none of them now living on the old farm; the venerable house burned down some years ago; but his virile blood runs strong in at least a thousand Americans in different parts of the country — perhaps of the world.

The Richardsons have borne a great part in the history of Woburn and of Winchester. In 1769, of all the names on the Province tax list for Woburn, forty-two out of three hundred and thirty were Richardsons. More than twenty-five of the family have been selectmen of either the mother or the daughter town. Nine have been deacons of the old church Ezekiel, Samuel and Thomas helped to found in 1640. The name is scattered thickly over the lists of men who have served in the Colonial wars and those of the United States from the time when Nathaniel Richardson fell wounded in the Great Swamp fight of King Philip's War to the Armistice of 1918. We shall have occasion to speak of many of the family as we proceed in our story.

CHAPTER IV

THE SYMMES, GARDNER AND JOHNSON FAMILIES

So much has been said in the last two chapters of the historic relations between Woburn and Winchester that the reader may need to be reminded that one-third of the present town of Winchester was never a part of Woburn. That is, however, the fact. All the land south of a line drawn down the center of Church Street and prolonged to the westward to the Lexington line, and on the east passing from School to Prospect streets across Manchester Field, remained at first in Charlestown, and in later years became a part either of Medford or West Cambridge (Arlington). The Symmes and Gardner families became the first settlers of this region, one to the east and north of the upper Mystic Lake, the other to the west of it.

As early as 1636 Charlestown had granted three hundred acres in Waterfield to the Rev. Zechariah Symmes, the minister of its church. The Rev. Mr. Symmes was, like Captain Edward Johnson, from Canterbury in the English county of Kent, and had been a parson in the established church for twelve years before his Puritan convictions led him to migrate to New England. He was a good man, a renowned preacher and a leading figure in the Puritan theocracy of the seventeenth century. He was highly regarded by his Charlestown flock, and though it is recorded that one of his parishioners, a certain goodwife Ursula Cole, once declared she "had as lief hear an old cat mew as the Rev. Zechariah Symmes preach," it is also of record that the court subsequently fined her five pounds and the costs of the court or else to be publicly whipped, for her offence. It was not safe in those days to speak with disrespect of a holy man's efforts in the pulpit.

The Symmes farm covered almost all of the present Winchester which lies south of the old Woburn line as just described and east of a line drawn about southeast from the corner of Bacon and Church streets to the old course of the Aberjona, now flooded by

the water of the upper lake. The Rev. Mr. Symmes himself never lived upon it, but he must have cut hay upon its meadows by the riverside, for in 1658 we find him bringing suit against Thomas Broughton and Edward Collins of Medford, who had built a dam across the Mystic River in the neighborhood of Alewife Brook, whereby the water so rose upon his meadow that "his farm was incapable of maintaining his cattle in winter and part of the summer." This was the same Edward Collins whom we have already seen accusing Deacon Josiah Converse of horse theft. He was, it appears, much of a thorn in the sides of our early town fathers. The suit was apparently compromised at the time, but seventeen years later another suit was begun, based on the same complaint. This time it came to trial and the estate of the Rev. Zechariah, who had recently died, profited to the amount of forty-one shillings in damages.¹ It is possible, nay probable, that as early as 1658 Mr. Symmes' son, Captain William, was already living on the farm, which became his own on his father's death. It was stipulated in the will that he should pay over to his brothers and sisters a hundred pounds for their share in the estate; but although he had never done this up to the time of his own death, the other heirs agreed to resign their claim,² and the farm came eventually into the hands of Captain William's son, who bore the same name.

The original Symmes house was not, as many people suppose, at the corner so long identified with the family name. It stood near the northern edge of the Symmes grant, on land now included in Manchester Field; and near it, according to an old map of 1705 still preserved in the collections of the Winchester Historical Society, was the "dye-house" built by Captain William for dyeing homespun cloth. His son William, about 1700, built another and larger house further down the river about where Lakeview Terrace is now (1936) and as the family increased in numbers a third house was built on the opposite side of the river, not far from the bridge by which the Mystic Valley Parkway now crosses it. During the eighteenth century this cluster of Symmes houses, so close to the Aberjona, caused many people to call the stream the Symmes River, and it is so named on several ancient maps.

¹ Medford Historical Register, Vol. XIII, No. 1.

² Vinton, Symmes Memorial, page 19.

These farm buildings were a considerable distance from any highway, and they were reached by a cart path from Grove Street — the first road to Medford — which descended the hill somewhere near Grove Place and crossed the river by a rude bridge near the site of the Parkway bridge just referred to.

Captain William Symmes seems to have put a dam across the river not far from this point and built a mill, which is spoken of in the settlement of his estate. His son William certainly had a mill, probably a larger and better one, at this spot where he carried on the business of fulling and dyeing cloth. I shall have something to say about the interesting history of this mill privilege in a later chapter. Here it may be noted that the Symmes dam stood until 1864, when, on the taking of the upper lake as a source of water supply for Charlestown, it was destroyed.

Below the bridge and dam stretched a wide meadow, through which the Aberjona meandered to its union with the upper Mystic Lake at the "narrows," near the house of the Winchester Boat Club. This was the meadow over which the Rev. Zechariah went to law; it was for two hundred years a valuable haying field for the Symmes family. A little way to the northwest of the winding river a remarkable spring came up out of the meadow; it is shown and called the "Spring Pond" on the old maps. It is said to have been fifty feet across and thirty feet deep; perhaps the largest spring in this part of the country. It lies now beneath the water of the Upper Lake, some three hundred feet from the shore at Everett Avenue, but its fountain of water is doubtless still gushing upward as in days of yore.¹

When the pollution of the lake by the wastes of tanneries, dye houses and gelatine factories in Woburn began, some forty or fifty years ago, it was possible to row out into the lake and determine the location of this spring by the congregation of numbers of pickerel which sought this oasis of pure water amidst the desert of pollution, which could plainly be seen, crowded with fish, just beneath the surface of the lake.

In former times, indeed, the Mystic Lakes were notable fishing grounds. Pickerel, perch and bass were plentiful there. In the spring the Mystic River and the lakes were full of alewives, which

¹ According to an old map of 1765, this spring was then on Gardner property.

swarmed upward from the sea. These little fish also ascended the Aberjona and even found their way into Wedge and Horn Ponds; the dams being furnished with "fish-ways" for their accommodation. An aged resident now long dead¹ was wont to recall how Josiah Symmes, who occupied a part of the old farm along the river a hundred years ago and more, used to seine enormous numbers of alewives and sell them by the wheelbarrow load to his neighbors. Shad were also known to come up into the Mystic Lakes in the spawning season. It is many years since any fish have been able to survive in Mystic waters; but since the worst of the poisonous mill waste has been diverted to sewers by order of the State Board of Health, the lakes are clearing, and the experiment is being made of planting pickerel and perhaps other fish there. In course of time fishermen may once again find it worth while to visit them.

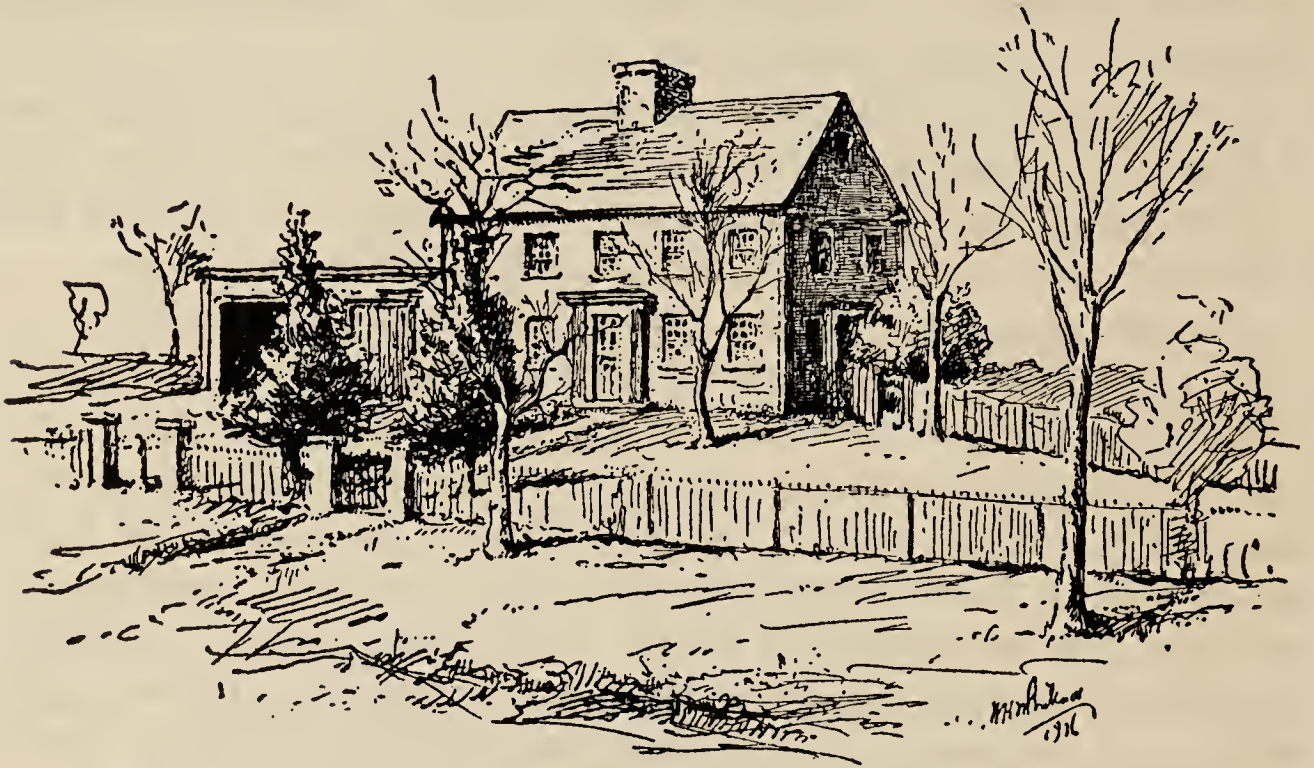
To return to the Symmes farm itself, it included nearly all of what present-day Winchester knows as Rangeley. This was for generations pasture land, and as was common in those days, when wool for household spinning and weaving was so much in demand, a large flock of sheep usually browsed there. It is a tradition in the family that in the winter of 1790 an early snowstorm, coming unexpectedly, overwhelmed the sheep. The storm proved a real blizzard; the sheep, to escape the wind, took refuge in a draw or gully which can be seen today behind the houses in Central Green. There they were buried under enormous drifts; but the warmth of their breath melted breathing holes through the snow, and when, after several days of search, they were found and dug out of their imprisonment, all except one or two were found alive and unharmed.

We have not the space to trace all the lines of the Symmes family, which has so multiplied upon the soil where it was planted some three hundred years ago that, besides furnishing pioneers to other towns and states further west and even to Canada, there remain today (1936) fourteen male citizens of the name in Winchester, and an undetermined, but very large number, in whose veins the Symmes blood flows. But there are some who should be particularly mentioned.

Captain John Symmes, of the fifth generation, served with great credit in the Revolutionary War with a company from Med-

¹ Hon. Nathaniel A. Richardson.

ford. After he came home in 1780, he, apparently the first of the family, moved up the hill and built himself a house on Grove Street near its junction with Main Street, the spot that has ever since been called Symmes Corner. He built a wheelwright shop there, too, and a blacksmith shop, where he is said to have made wagons for the use of the army. His son, also named John, continued his father's business and built the old house beneath the spreading elm tree where Grove and Main streets meet. It was a



HOUSE OF CAPTAIN JOHN SYMMES

grandson of this John, christened Francis Edward Symmes, who on the early death of both parents was adopted by his mother's brother, Rev. Edward W. Clark, and his name changed by law to Francis Edward Clark. Grown to manhood, this boy also became a clergyman, and is known in every corner of the world as the founder and "father" of the great Christian Endeavor Society.

Marshall Symmes, a son of Captain John and a brother of John, Jr., was long a blacksmith in the shop at the corner of Bacon and Main streets,¹ and he built in 1817 the house with the brick ends still standing not far from that corner and still occupied by his descendants.

Thomas Symmes, a third brother, met a strange death in the

¹ Bacon Street did not exist in 1817, except perhaps as a cart path; it was not laid out until eight years later.

year 1811. It was in December; snow lay on the ground. Thomas had gone with an ox-sled to Turkey Swamp (where the South Reservoir is today) to cut timber. In the afternoon he prepared to return home. Coming down the hill, the sled, heavily loaded with logs, slewed from the path and crushed the man between it and a tree. He was almost instantly killed; when a searching party found him at eight in the evening he had been dead several hours. The oxen were still standing quietly, chewing their cuds. They must have stopped at the driver's command just as he was caught and killed.¹

Zechariah Symmes, a cousin of these brothers, moved just across the line into Woburn; we shall hear of him again as a one-time proprietor of the historic Black Horse Tavern.

Little by little the three hundred acres of the Rev. Zechariah have contracted as the estate has been divided among his descendants and parts of it sold to others. Most of the old farm is today thickly covered with the dwelling houses of the town, though certain acres are still owned in fields or house lots by members of the family, and a good sized portion was until comparatively recent years farmed by Samuel S. Symmes, of the eighth generation of the family in Winchester.

There are two transfers of property that should be noticed here as of special importance. One is the sale in 1715 by William Symmes the second, of a large part of his land that lay east of Main Street to Ebenezer Brooks of Medford. This land ran right up to Symmes Corner itself, and Brooks built his house there nearly opposite to the spot where stands the brick-end house that Marshall Symmes built a century later. In this house was born Dr. John Brooks, who was Governor of Massachusetts from 1817 to 1823, one of the most distinguished natives of Winchester. It later became the property of Governor Brooks's niece, Mary Brooks, who married a Captain Le Bosquet, and it was long known as the Le Bosquet house.² It disappeared fifty years ago, but the flagstone covering its old well can be seen today on the lawn of the house that took its place.

¹ This historian is indebted to Samuel S. Symmes for much interesting material concerning this family. See the *Winchester Record* of January 13, 1933.

² Captain Le Bosquet was an interesting character, of whom more will be said in Chapter VIII.

The other important sale of land was made more than a hundred years later when most of the Symmes land west of the Aberjona was sold to Robert Bacon, whose family have long been well known in Winchester. With the land went the mill privilege on the river which Mr. Bacon used for some years in his business of making felt for hats. It was at this time — 1825 — that Bacon Street was cut through from Main to Church streets, the first highway across the old Symmes farm, and it was only a year or two later that Mr. Bacon built the handsome house with brick ends which stands on the Mystic Valley Parkway, offering to the traveller a gracious welcome to Winchester.

The land on the opposite side of the Upper Mystic Lake and south of Church Street was, as I have already mentioned, the original grant of three hundred acres to Increase Nowell. He never built upon it, and after his death it was bought — in 1659 — by Richard Gardner, whose descendants lived upon it, or parts of it, for almost two hundred years. Gardner was living in Woburn — or Winchester as it now is — as early as 1651. His first house was near the western shore of Winter Pond; the cellar hole, partly filled with old brick, evidently made in England, and the straggling remains of the hedge he planted were visible there as late as 1857. But after buying the Nowell farm at “Charlestown End” he moved thither and built a house not far from the corner of Cambridge Street and Glen Road.

Richard Gardner had many daughters but only one son, Henry; but Henry had four sons, and with his death the division of the land and the gradual dispersion of the family began. One of the four sons, John Gardner, went to Harvard, became the minister of Stow, and sold his portion of the estate, which was far up on the hill, on what is now Country Club and adjacent property, to the Hutchinson family.¹ He was the father of Henry Gardner, Treasurer of the Commonwealth in Revolutionary times, and grandfather of Henry J. Gardner, once Governor of Massachusetts.

The family, though living in Charlestown, was much associated with Woburn. Their names are constantly found on Woburn docu-

¹ An interesting article about the Hutchinson farm, much of which remained in the family for two hundred years, may be found in the *Winchester Star* for June 9, 1899. It was written by the late T. M. Hutchinson.

ments; Richard was one of the jury of inquest in the sad death of Samuel Converse. They owned a pew in Woburn meetinghouse, and Henry Gardner of the fifth generation was a deacon in that church. He died childless in 1838; the somewhat dilapidated house in which he lived is still to be seen near the corner of High and Arlington streets. His mother lived to be nearly one hundred, and used often to tell of watching the smoke of the battle of Bunker Hill



THE GARDNER-SWAN HOUSE IN 1900

from the summit of Andrews Hill when she was a child of ten or eleven. Another member of the family was Captain Joseph Gardner, a leading citizen of Woburn, whose old house still stands near the Four Corners on the road from Woburn to Lexington. He was often a selectman and a deputy to the General Court.

One by one the branches of the Gardner family died out or moved away from the ancestral farm. Edward Gardner, a cousin of Deacon Henry and Captain Joseph, died early, and his house and land were sold to John Swan. The house now almost two hundred years old, but restored and improved, is that now occupied

by Mr. F. Patterson Smith on Cambridge Street near the foot of Swan Road. It is the oldest house now standing in the town.

The last of the name to live in Winchester was Samuel Gardner of the sixth generation. In 1858 he sold the only remaining part of the ancient Increase Nowell farm to Hon. Edward Everett, who built there on the shore of Mystic Lake the mansion which still (1936) stands there, but may not long remain. Samuel Gardner himself removed to Reading.

Richard Gardner had in 1650 two neighbors, whose farms like his stretched from the level land through which Plain Street (now Cambridge Street) ran, back over the fertile hill country to the southward. One was Major William Johnson, third son of Captain Edward Johnson, the distinguished son of a famous father. William Johnson was eminent both in the military and political life of Woburn and of the colony of Massachusetts Bay. He was for sixteen years Town Clerk, a member of the General Court, and at two different times one of the Assistants to the Governor, which means that he was not only a member of what may be called the Senate of the colony but also of its highest court — the Court of Appeals as we might call it today. He was removed from this office during the regime of Sir Edmund Andros, who was sent over to New England by King James II to reduce the obstinately independent Puritan colony to proper submission. While Andros remained here, Johnson was one of the "Council for the Safety of the People," which directed the opposition to King James's tyrannical policy, and after the deposition of Andros in 1689 Johnson resumed his seat among the Assistants.

Almost all his life he was a magistrate, and it is said to his credit that though several persons were brought before him during the witchcraft delusion and accused of being witches, his common sense was too strong for him to permit charges in court to be laid against them. He was conspicuous in the colony militia, and saw some service in King Philip's War. Four of his grandsons took part in Captain Lovewell's famous fight with the Indians on the Maine frontier (1725), and one of them was killed there. Another, Noah Johnson, was the last survivor of the fight; he died at the age of one hundred, lacking only six months, in Plymouth, New



THE GARDNER-SWAN HOUSE IN 1936

Hampshire. A third, Captain Seth Wyman, won distinction by his conduct of the little force of white men after Lovewell himself had been killed.

Major Johnson's house stood on Plain Street (now Cambridge Street), not far beyond the corner of Wildwood Street. As nearly as can be determined it was on the site of the Russell house, just beyond the Winchester Conservatories. The major was a wealthy man for the times; he owned nine hundred acres of land, much of it in what is now the town of Burlington. Several of his sons lived in that part of old Woburn, but his son William and his grandson of the same name lived in the old homestead until near the middle of the eighteenth century. Then the grandson sold the homestead to Thomas Belknap, from whom it passed to the Reed family who lived there through three generations.

Others of his descendants continued to live in the neighborhood, however. His son Josiah had a house on the lane that used to run off Cambridge Street opposite Wildwood Street, and was long known as Johnson Lane. Josiah in turn was the great-grandfather of Colonel Francis Johnson and Deacon Nathan B. Johnson whom we shall meet later as leading citizens of Winchester in the years just previous to the incorporation of the town; and a great-great-grandfather of Warren Johnson, whom some of our old citizens can well remember. As late as 1831 Ezekiel and Levi Johnson, who were of Major William's lineage, owned and occupied farms along Ridge Street to the west of High Street.

Captain John Carter, the second commander of the Woburn militia company¹ and one of the original settlers of the town of Woburn, lived and owned the land between Richard Gardner and Major Johnson. His house may have stood on Plain Street (Cambridge Street), about halfway between the entrances to Calumet Road and Foxcroft Road. There was certainly an ancient Carter house standing there until about 1800, occupied by his descendant Simon Carter.² His land lay on both sides of Plain Street and reached up to and beyond the top of Andrews Hill. An old family burial vault, built of heavy granite blocks, is still to be seen at the end of Indian Hill Road, though empty and dismantled. The

¹ Capt. Edward Johnson was the first.

² According to tradition, however, the original house was on High Street, not far from Ridge Street.

Carters were long numerous in this part of the town, but the family is no longer to be found here.

This Captain John Carter was involved in 1658 in a suit for slander brought against him by Captain Edward Johnson, the distinguished "father" of the town. Captain Johnson was the Town Clerk of Woburn until his death. In the year aforesaid, disputes arose about the accuracy of his records. It was charged that a committee of the town, appointed to lay out the road which we now call Church Street, had reported that it could not agree; but that Captain Johnson had nevertheless entered on the records the layout of the road as it exists today, though the town had taken no action at all in the matter. Other mistakes or omissions were alleged, and the townspeople appear to have been much stirred up by the dispute. Sides were taken, of course, and John Carter was an outspoken critic of Captain Johnson. On training day, in the presence of the whole militia company of which he was then lieutenant and Johnson was captain, he declared that the town records "were not worth a straw," and going further he added that a certain lease which Johnson had drawn for a neighbor, was "knavishly drawn or knavishly intended."

This was serious talk; one of those who heard Carter sputter out his charges remarked that if they could be proved Captain Johnson might "lose his ears." To defend his good name Johnson brought instant suit for slander. The trial was held in Charlestown. Many of the men with whose names we have become familiar figured in it. Josiah Converse was a jurymen. His father, the venerable Edward Converse, Richard Gardner and William Johnson were among the witnesses. The records bristle with affidavits; those of Edward Converse seem to show that he, like Carter, thought his old comrade Johnson had put into the records or left out of them what it pleased him to record or omit. In the end the jury found for the plaintiff. John Carter had to pay five pounds in damages besides the costs of the case; and on the next training day, standing before the militia company, he had to withdraw his charges and apologize for them. We can imagine that this affair agitated the infant settlement to its very depths, and may have aroused hostile feelings that were long in dying out.¹

¹ For an account of this trial, with the affidavits of witnesses, see the article in the *Winchester Press* for September 5, 1902. The case is on file in the Middlesex County Court Records.

Further up the hill than the Carter land, beyond the present crossing of High and Ridge streets, was the farm of James Locke. This man was the son of William Locke, another of the earliest settlers of Woburn, though he came there as a mere boy, in the care of his uncle, Nicholas Davis. William Locke's house was at the Four Corners on the road to Lexington; his son James was living on the farm in Winchester as early as 1699, when he bought it of James Converse, who then owned the land. James Locke was the ancestor of the many families of the name who have lived in Winchester to the present day. His great-grandson Josiah built the interesting house with brick ends on High Street, near the corner of Ridge Street, in the early years of the last century. This house is remarkable for its old wainscotting, more than three feet in height, made of single planks of white pine, each cut from the heart of a great tree. Looking at them we can understand why the earliest name of this hill country, as shown by James Locke's deed of purchase, was Pine Mountain. What a magnificent forest of clear white pine it must have borne to furnish boards of that size and quality!

The Locke family is even more numerous in Woburn and Lexington than in Winchester. Its most distinguished son was Rev. Samuel Locke, who was president of Harvard in the years just previous to the Revolution.

There is extant a deed given in 1649 to prove that John Green, a leading citizen of Charlestown, had a house on Andrews Hill, probably on High Street, at the end of the present Arlington Street, since his Waterfield lot was at that point. What became of it we do not know further than that he sold it to one Thomas Knight. He does not figure again in Winchester history. His brother, William Green, also lived in this neighborhood, but his land and house passed on his death to his nephew, the second John Carter.

If the reader is surprised to find houses and cultivated farms so early in what seems — or did until recently seem — a remote and rather inaccessible part of the town, it must be remembered that the hill district was not in that day so very much harder to come at than the rest of the town. It was all a forest-covered country except perhaps for part of the flat land between the Mystic Lakes and Winter Pond. What "roads" there were were at first

no more than blazed bridle paths, made as easily in one direction as another. There is, and always has been, some excellent farming country on the hills above our town; and it was good farming land and not level building lots or easy accessibility that interested our forefathers of three hundred years ago. Better roads on the lower land did, after a while, make land there more to be desired, but still better roads are now making the beautiful hill country easy to reach, and houses, many of them in wonderfully sightly situations, are fast spreading back over the old farms that Gardners and Johnsons and Carters and Lockes and Hutchinsons once tilled.

CHAPTER V

WATERFIELD IN THE SIXTEEN HUNDREDS. CHURCH AND STATE IN OLD WOBURN

THE old roads that served the early inhabitants of Winchester were no more than half a dozen in number, and it is proof of the wholly rural character of the neighborhood for many years that by 1800 only two or three tributary roads had been added. The earliest road of all was, of course, that which led from Medford, through the heart of Waterfield, to the village of Woburn. This road is represented today by Grove Street and Main Street, for Grove Street was at first the accepted way to Medford. It follows what was from time immemorial the Indian trail from the Mystic River to the Aberjona, round the shores of the Mystic Lakes. There is no record of the laying out of Grove Street and none concerning Main Street until 1646, but both must have been in existence before that, if only as bridle paths leading through the forest and marked by blazes on the sides of the trees.

On June 6, 1641 the Woburn records tell us that "a bridge was made across Horn Pond river, though the place was so boggy that it swallowed up much wood before it could be made passable;¹ yet it was finished and called Long Bridge."² This bridge, the construction of which was the occasion, as Sewall the Woburn historian says, for a day of fasting and prayer, could have been nowhere else than near the lower end of the Horn Pond outlet, then a far larger stream than it is today. The brook or "river" had not then been diverted to enter Wedge Pond as it now does; it flowed past that pond at the foot of the little hill leading to Cutter Village. The "Long Bridge" was quite clearly intended to carry over the stream the road from Charlestown and Medford to the newly determined site of Woburn Village. It was not precisely on the

¹ Doubtless referring to the difficulty of building "corduroyed" approaches to the bridge.

² Woburn Records, Vol. I, page 4; Sewall's Woburn, page 18; Arthur E. Whitney in *Winchester Record*, Vol. II, page 426.

present route of Main Street, however. In ancient times, before the raising of the old Converse mill dam had flooded so much of the low land where Black Ball Pond now lies, the road lay nearer to the Aberjona.¹ Blind Bridge Street is a remnant of the old way down to the Long Bridge. In later years we find this crossing of the Horn Pond outlet universally called Blind Bridge, perhaps because the growth of trees and underwood about it concealed it from the traveller till he was right upon it.

The entire road from Woburn through Winchester center to Medford was more carefully laid out in 1660. It was to be four poles or rods in width, though its beginnings as a forest path are indicated by the "blazed trees" which here and there are mentioned as defining its course. By this time Grove Street was no longer the only way to Medford; the new highway branched off at Symmes Corner to follow much of the present route to Medford. It did not, however, follow that route to Winthrop Square, but reached Medford High Street by way of what is now called Woburn Street, somewhat to the west of the square.

Another very early road was that long called Richardson's Row; it was of course the only way for the settlers at the northeastern end of Winchester to get to Converse's gristmill and Charlestown. It must be remembered that in the early days roads were used mainly as a means of getting either to the gristmill or the church. Farms were self-contained units then; they supplied the food, fuel and the clothing for the family; for people dressed in woolen garments made from yarns spun at home from the wool of their own sheep. Their corn had to be ground for them, however, and they had to go to church — or thought they had. Most roads, therefore, led either to a mill or a meetinghouse; and in December 1647 we find the town of Woburn laying out a road so that the three Richardsons and their families might more conveniently get to church. This road was substantially the present Cross Street. It was not a much-travelled road, and for many years there were bars to be taken down or a gate to be opened about halfway

¹ The location of the old road and the Long or Blind Bridge is shown clearly on a map of the Abel Richardson farm, surveyed in 1831 by Loammi Baldwin, Jr. This map is in the collections of the Winchester Historical Society. The subject is somewhat controversial, however. W. R. Cutter, in the *Winchester Record*, Vol. III, page 16, upholds the view that the Long Bridge was on the present Pond Street, at the outlet of Horn Pond.

between Richardson's Row (Washington Street) and Main Street.

It was as early as 1643 that three men of whom we have already heard much, Edward Converse, Ezekiel Richardson and Captain Cooke of Cambridge, were chosen to lay out a road from Woburn to Cambridge. It was also recorded that this was a way for those living in the west of Woburn to get to Captain Cooke's gristmill, which the reader will perhaps remember from its situation at the further end of the Squaw Sachem land.¹ This road they called Plain Street; we know it today as Cambridge Street. A few years later the present Pond Street was located in order to shorten the distance from Woburn meetinghouse to this road.

In 1646 the town of Woburn voted to lay out a road from the "King's Ford" by Edward Converse's mill to Plain Street. It was in connection with the location of this road, which today we call Church Street, that the distressing controversy arose which led, as narrated in the previous chapter, to John Carter's being mulcted five pounds for slander.² For almost two hundred years this highway was known as Driver's Lane, because it was a convenient way for folk to drive their cattle to pasturage on the Town Common in the vicinity of Winter Pond. It seems not to have been much used for other purposes. There were no houses built upon it for a very long time; and one of the witnesses in the Johnson-Carter suit is quoted as urging his fellow citizens to use it more "in summer as well as in winter, lest it be lost to our children"—an illuminating evidence of the infrequency of travel in those days of isolated farms, rough and ill-kept roads, and clumsy, uncomfortable wheeled vehicles.

Besides these principal ways there grew up a few others. High Street, a prolongation of Driver's Lane, gave access to the farms on the west side hills, and Ridge Street, originally a mere cart path, reached the Johnson houses to the west and the Hutchinsons to the east. Forest Street was long a crooked farm lane, until the need for a direct road to the village of Stoneham presented itself. There is no evidence of its being laid out officially until 1850. Bacon Street, logical as its course seems to us, did not exist until 1825. There were no other streets or roads added for well on two hundred

¹ See Chapter I, page 9.

² See Chapter IV, page 54.

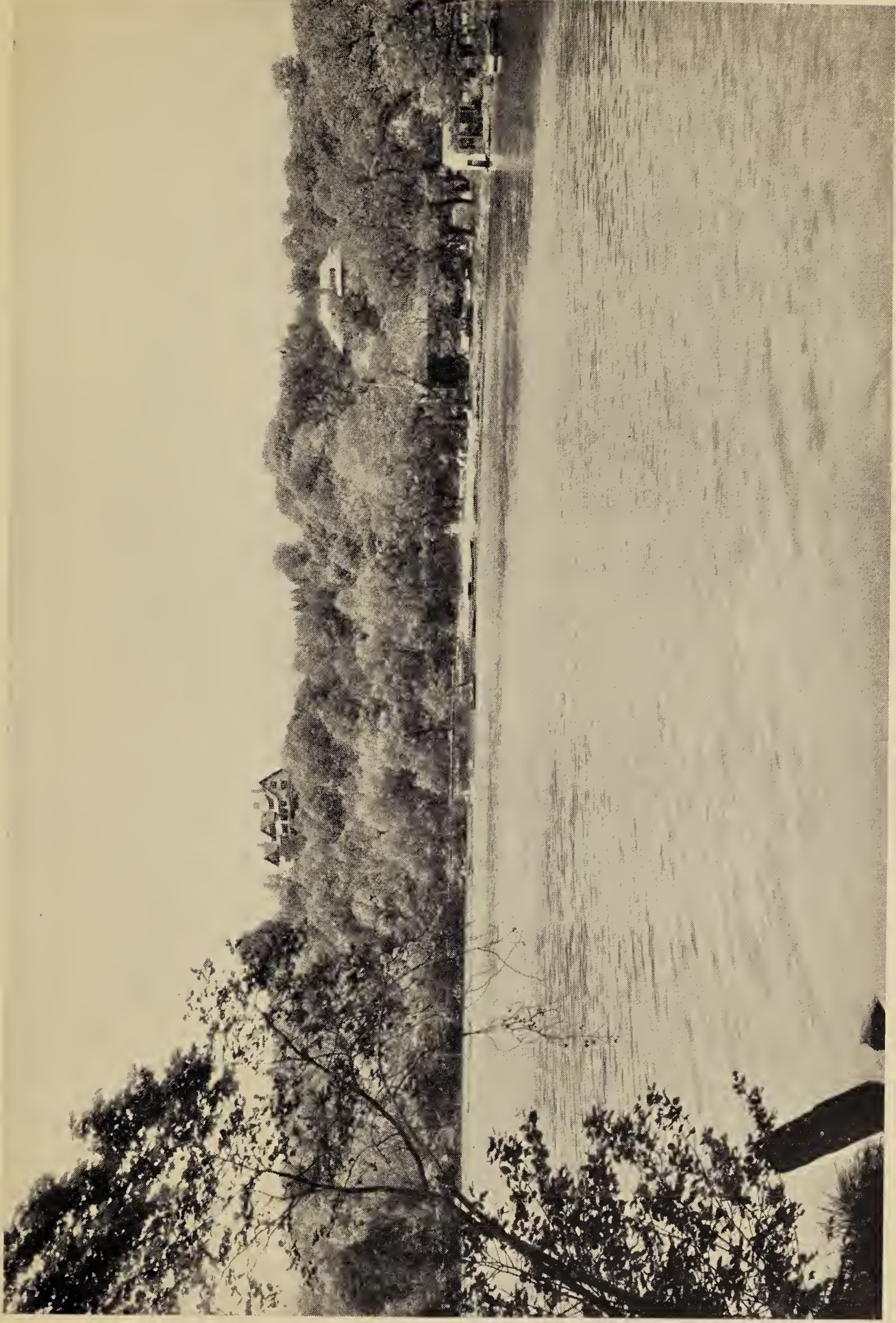
years from the first settlement of Winchester. A map drawn in 1831¹ and preserved today shows little more in the way of highways than one made in 1650 would have shown.

In addition to maintaining its own roads and bridges, Woburn was long obliged to bear its share in maintaining the "great" bridge over the Mystic River at Medford. Malden and Reading were under the same obligation, the argument being that since the bridge was essential to the citizens of the three towns who wished to go by road to Boston they should lend a hand in keeping it in repair. Woburn did so without complaint for nearly fifty years, but then the feeling arose that Medford should be responsible for all the bridges within its own limits as other towns were. Woburn accordingly ceased to make payments when called upon, and was cited to appear in the County Court to answer a "presentment" with regard to the affair. This happened first in 1691, and the town, still refusing to pay, it happened again in 1693. The town's representative, Sergeant Matthew Johnson (a South Woburn or Winchester man), protested that Woburn was illegally assessed; since the law provided that "bridges should be mended by those towns in whose precincts they lie."

The Court, however, listened with favor to the plea of Medford that long custom was in this case the equivalent of law, and ordered Woburn to pay or be fined five pounds. This led to an appeal, and to Matthew Johnson was added Lieutenant James Converse, 2d (another Winchester man and the hero of the Indian fighting at Wells) as one of the town's agents in the case. The Court considered the case again, but held to its first decision. Woburn had to pay, and to keep on paying for its share of the cost of repairing the Mystic Bridge until 1761, when, by an agreement with the town of Medford, Woburn paid a lump sum of £200, and was released from any further responsibility for the bridge. By way of indicating the serious depreciation of the colonial currency (to which reference will be made later in this chapter) it may be noted that the £200 voted by the town is stated in the agreement to be the equivalent of only £26, 13 shillings and 4 pence of "lawful money" or coin.²

¹ A map of the town of Woburn surveyed and drawn by Bartholomew Richardson in compliance with a State requirement.

² Woburn Records, Vol. VIII, page 466.



THE BOAT CLUB COVE FROM THE AQUEDUCT



The reader must by this time have some picture in his mind of the original Waterfield, since become the town of Winchester, as it appeared in the years previous to 1700. It is still a forest-clad region, in that picture, pine and spruce and hemlock predominating on the high land and hard woods on the valley floor. Here and there among the trees clearings are to be seen, laboriously made for corn and pasture land, and in each clearing stands a house — not much more than a dozen or fifteen in all.¹ A few rough roads connect the scattered farms, and on the winding Aberjona there are two small mills, the Converse gristmill at the center and the Symmes mill not far from Mystic Lake. The nearest church is two miles or more away at Woburn Common.

The woods are still full of wild beasts, bears are common, and wolves are a continual menace, for they prey savagely on the harmless, necessary sheep, on the wool of which the settlers depend for all their homespun clothing. Liberal bounties on wolves were paid by the town of Woburn from the first. The records abound in payments — usually of ten shillings, which is equivalent to fifteen dollars or more of present-day money — to citizens who had delivered a wolf's head, "with the ears," to the town treasury.

Labor was hard and unremitting upon these farms, as it has always been in New England farm households. It was especially severe in the early days, because the cultivated land had still to be cut out of the stubborn wilderness and painfully cleared of rocks and tree stumps, because the pioneer was without the improved tools and labor-saving contrivances his descendants possess, and because there was added to the housewife's duties the spinning and weaving of woolen cloth for the homemade blankets and clothing. On Sunday there were the church services, which everyone who was physically able was supposed to attend. Indeed they were glad to attend them, not only as a religious duty but as a social opportunity — almost the only one offered to see and talk with their neighbors.

It is hard for the modern reader to realize how closely the

¹ We have the tithing lists of 1680, from which the number of families living in our Winchester territory can be pretty well determined. They include those of Josiah, James, Sr. and James, Jr. Converse, Samuel, Stephen, Isaac and Nathaniel Richardson, John Carter and his son John, William and Matthew Johnson, John Holton, Thomas Pierce, Henry Gardner and William Symmes.

Puritan church and the Puritan town interlocked. The church *was* the town, and the town *was* the church. No one could vote if he were not a member of the church in good standing. No one could even move into town and get land to live on unless he was acceptable on grounds of religious orthodoxy. If anyone was negligent about attending church the town authorities were instantly down on him. If anyone entertained unorthodox beliefs, as some of the Woburn people did on the subject of infant baptism about 1670, he was arrested by the civil authorities, and if he resisted admonition he stood in danger of going to jail. Henry Dunster, an early president of Harvard, lost his position and eventually found it advisable to move out of Massachusetts Bay into the Plymouth colony, because he sympathized with the views of the Baptist denomination and would not have his infant children baptized.

The town officials kept a very careful oversight over the morals, the conduct and the religious practices of the townspeople. It is not surprising to find the Selectmen fining William Deane for "excess in drinke" three shillings four pence, or John Johnson, junior, for a like offense ten groats.¹ Drunkenness has ever been matter for exemplary punishment. But it is a little unexpected to find the Selectmen summoning John Carter before them, "animadverting" upon him for misspending his time, and admonishing him to "improve his conduct for the future, or else he might expect some other course would be taken." And they were continually having up one Hopestill Foster, who seems to have been a very objectionable type of Yankee, for "inordinate wages," for "oppression"—which means overcharging—in making brads for Josiah Converse, or for a similar offence in making "streak nayles" for Matthew Johnson.²

It was part of the Selectmen's duty to see that people went to church, behaved themselves there — and elsewhere — and brought up their children properly. Much of this responsibility they later delegated to the tithing men; but they were still expected to make the rounds of the parish at irregular intervals and examine the young children in their catechism, in order to see whether their parents were giving them proper instruction. Education in religious

¹ Town Records, Vol. II, page 74; II, page 147.

² Town Records, Vol. II, page 458.

doctrines was regarded as far more important than in such matters as reading, writing and arithmetic. A good many of the people had to make their marks when it came to signing their names to a document; probably very few of them could not have stood a questioning on the Shorter — or even the Longer — Catechism.

The minister of the church was a town officer called by the town, and in most cases settled for life, or “good behavior”! Every head of a family in town had to pay taxes toward his salary, whatever he thought of the man or his doctrines. If he was in arrears the town officials fell upon him and could distrain and sell his property to the required amount. For many years after the founding of the colony these taxes were paid cheerfully; but after 1700 the austere faith of the fathers was on the wane. Many families began to demand the right to differ from the orthodox doctrines if it seemed good to them to do so, and to resent the compulsion of paying the salary of a minister whose theology or whose personality they did not like. Rev. John Fox, the third minister of Woburn, was, toward the end of his life, often forced to appeal to the courts and even to the legislature to compel the payment in full of his salary.

The history of the Woburn church has been told with so much loving circumstantiality by the Rev. Samuel Sewall, historian of that town, that it need not be repeated here in all its detail. Some outline of that history ought, however, to be given. For a full two hundred years — until 1840 — it was the church attended by all who lived within the present bounds of Winchester, excepting only the Symmes families and a few others to whom portions of the Symmes land were sold. This land, the reader will remember, was in the town of Medford, and churchgoers from that district usually went either to the Medford or the West Cambridge (Arlington) church.

The first minister at Woburn was the Rev. Thomas Carter, who remained in the office for forty-two years. Toward the end of his life the Rev. Jabez Fox was his associate, and after Mr. Carter's death Mr. Fox succeeded him and occupied the pulpit until his death in 1703. During the ministry of these two early pastors the church seems to have been in general harmonious and prosperous. By 1672 it had grown so much in numbers that the original meeting-

house had to be abandoned and a larger one built on the rising ground just off the northeastern corner of Woburn Common. This building was a square edifice, crowned in the center by a wooden belfry; the bell rope, as was not uncommon in churches of that period, hung down into the central aisle, among the pews. Those who have seen the ancient church called "The Old Ship," still standing in Hingham, will have a very good idea of the appearance of the second Woburn meetinghouse.

One episode did, however, disturb the serenity of these sixty years which ended with Mr. Fox's death. That was the appearance within the church of what our forefathers called "the Anabaptist heresy." This was neither more nor less than the doctrine, now held by the great Baptist denomination everywhere, that baptism ought to be the rite confirming a conscious conversion, and that accordingly infants ought not to be baptized. It was about 1670 that the existence of this belief began to be noticed among the members of the Woburn church. Several families refused to present their new-born children for baptism and, when remonstrated with by the minister and the deacons, pleaded their conscience as justifying their refusal.

But in 1670 the Puritan theocracy was still at the height of its power. Tolerance of religious views opposed to those of the clergy was unheard of. Dissenters, be they Baptists or Quakers, were handed over to the civil arm and sternly dealt with, for "heresy" was a statutory offence as much as stealing or manslaughter. No less than thirteen Woburn men were summoned into court at Charlestown for "turning their backs on infant baptism." Several were among the original settlers of the town — John and Francis Wyman, John Russell and Francis Kendall, for example. Two were sons of Captain Edward Johnson, Matthew and John. None except Matthew Johnson lived within the present bounds of Winchester. The fathers of Winchester seem to have been unshaken in their orthodoxy.

Most of the thirteen presented in court more or less willingly professed contrition, got off with a public admonition and returned, chastened, to full communion with the orthodox church. That is a striking illustration of the firm control the ministry held over the people in the early years of Massachusetts Bay. When men of

Puritan blood did not venture to stick to their convictions for fear of what might happen to them, in imprisonment, exile or sequestration of property, it is evident that the orthodox clergy wielded a political power it is difficult for us to imagine today.

One man, John Russell, stood out, and got sent to prison in consequence. He was a man of importance in Woburn, having been both a deacon and a selectman. How long he stayed in prison is uncertain. In the end he was released, still firm in the Baptist faith. He died not long after, but his son John, who had been summoned for the same offence, removed from Woburn to Boston, and became in 1679 preacher and pastor of the First Baptist Church in Boston, an office which he held for only one year, when death removed him also. This Russell, it seems, was a shoemaker by trade, and it was he whom the Rev. Increase Mather, that pillar of orthodoxy, had in mind when he fulminated a blast against the Baptists on the non-Scriptural text, "Ne sutor ultra crepidam — Shoemaker, stick to your last."

It was very probably John Russell (senior) who wrote the "Woburn Memorial for Christian Liberty" as early as 1653. This memorial was a petition to the General Court protesting against the law that "no person shall undertake any course of public preaching or prophesying without the approbation of four of the elders of the next churches or of the county court." The signers of this petition, John Russell and twenty-eight other members of the Woburn church, argued strongly for the toleration of lay preaching in newly settled communities or in churches where no minister was settled; but the clergy looked with profound disapproval on seeing anyone but an educated and ordained minister in the pulpit, and at that time the General Court was accustomed to do what the clergy told it to. So the petition was rejected. The settlement in South Woburn was, as I have mentioned, inclined to be orthodox; only two of the twenty-nine signers of the memorial, James and Josiah Converse, can be identified as residents of what is now Winchester.

Rev. Jabez Fox died in 1703 of smallpox, which he had contracted on a visit to Boston. This disease was often prevalent in colonial times, and in the seventeenth century no treatment either for prevention or cure was known. There was a serious outbreak of

it in Woburn in 1678 and 1679. At least twenty-seven cases are known to have appeared in the town, some of them in the district of Waterfield, and the selectmen issued strict orders for the isolation of the sick and of their nurses for a period of six weeks. No people living in Winchester territory are positively known to have died of it.

Rev. Jabez Fox was followed in the ministry at Woburn by his son, Rev. John Fox, who had already acted as master of the grammar school in the village. For many years he preached acceptably to an increasing congregation. There are extant in print at least two of his sermons, both delivered on the occasion of the great earthquake of October 29, 1727, and they show him to have been, if not a brilliant, a sound and thoughtful preacher of the orthodox school. This earthquake, by the way, was one of the most severe that ever visited New England. It was felt from Pennsylvania to Maine — and caused much alarm among the good people hereabout. Houses were shaken, chimneys thrown down, and a great store of crockery broken. Wide cracks appeared in the earth and many a well, hitherto productive, went dry. Our forefathers, according to their custom, looked upon it as a visitation from an exasperated God. The Rev. Mr. Fox, as the little pamphlet shows, took full advantage of the opportunity to put the fear of God into the hearts of his hearers.

About this time, however, his health and eyesight began to fail (he was totally blind for the last fifteen years of his life), and in 1729 an associate, Rev. Edward Jackson, was called to assist him.¹ From that moment dissension lifted its head. Mr. Fox and Mr. Jackson were temperamentally antagonistic; perhaps they differed also on points of theology. At all events their relations were never cordial, and before long they became so hostile that it is said neither would speak to the other, even in the pulpit. As was natural in such a situation the members of the congregation took sides. There was a Fox party and a Jackson party, and the feeling between them was, at times, extremely bitter. This unhappy state of affairs continued for more than twenty years, even until the death of Mr.

¹ The "entertainment" at the ordination of Mr. Jackson cost the town of Woburn £83, 9 shillings and 6 pence, a sum equal in present-day money to some \$2,000. Among the items are 433 dinners, 178 suppers and breakfasts, 6½ barrels of cider, 25 gallons of wine, 2 of brandy and 4 of rum.

Jackson in 1754, "notwithstanding the earnest endeavors of many well-disposed Ministers and other Christian brethren to reconcile these two ministers."¹

As Mr. Fox became more infirm, Mr. Jackson became more and more the real minister of the church, so much to the dissatisfaction of the opposite party that in 1745 a petition was presented to the Legislature praying for the right to establish a Third Parish in Woburn (the Second being the church in what is now Burlington). The old First Parish of course opposed the plan, but in vain. The General Court granted the petition, and a new parish consisting of some eighty pew holders, nearly half the membership of the old church, was founded, with Rev. Josiah Cotton as its pastor. The seceders agreed still to pay their proportion of Mr. Fox's salary, but were to be relieved of paying anything for the support of Mr. Jackson.

Even after the separation — perhaps the more because of it — the village animosities continued. Old Mr. Fox, whenever he could go abroad, met with Third Parish instead of with the church of which he was the senior pastor. Malicious tongues spread scandalous stories about Rev. Mr. Jackson, who was accused of being the father of an illegitimate child. When Rev. Mr. Cotton took up these tales and repeated them publicly, Mr. Jackson brought suit for libel. The case dragged on. The lower court found for the plaintiff; but on an appeal a jury in the Superior Court gave Mr. Cotton the verdict. The friends of Mr. Jackson stood by him in this painful situation, and the church took no steps to remove him. A year later, in January 1754, evidence having been found that there had been a conspiracy for character butchery in the case, Mr. Jackson pleaded for a review of the cause. The court granted his plea, and when the suit came again to trial, Mr. Cotton, convinced that he had been deceived, entered no defence. Judgment was entered for Mr. Jackson, who, satisfied with this vindication of his character, declined to press his claim for a thousand pounds in damages.

Before the year was out, Mr. Jackson died. Two years later the venerable Mr. Fox also passed away. Not very long thereafter

¹ Petition of those who desired to form a Third Parish in Woburn, Sewall's History of Woburn, page 305.

the two rival parishes, who had found the burden of supporting two separate ministries decidedly irksome, decided to forget their differences and reunite. The first name upon the joint committee that brought this happy solution to pass is that of Josiah Johnson, who was prominent in all town affairs and whose home was just off Cambridge Street within the present Winchester.

During these twenty years of faction, the Woburn church had financial worries to trouble it. Both Mr. Fox and Mr. Jackson had frequent difficulty in collecting their salaries. This was due in part to the dissension within the church; the people were no longer so far constrained by a stern sense of duty as to pay cheerfully for the support of two ministers, one or the other of whom was disliked by almost everyone, while one — Mr. Fox — was so infirm that he could discharge only a small part of his duties. Mr. Fox was obliged for several years in succession to appeal to the General Court to get any salary at all, for the town held that the contract made with him in 1704 was made void when he could no longer discharge the "whole ministry" of the church and had to call in a colleague. The General Court took the minister's view of the case, and assessed a special tax on the people of Woburn to pay Mr. Fox his eighty pounds a year. After this had been repeated several times the town surrendered and agreed to pay him his salary as long as he lived.

Mr. Jackson's difficulties were not the same. They grew out of the continual depreciation of the paper money of the time. He still got the number of pounds specified in his contract with the town, but as their value fell to one half or less of what it had been when he came to Woburn he set up a claim to additional pay, in order to make the purchasing value of his salary what it had been at first. The town fought this claim vigorously, but lost again. The courts gave Mr. Jackson the right to collect from the taxpayers enough to make his salary "as good as it was when he first settled in Woburn." In some years the addition amounted to £100.¹

Our forefathers were often in perplexity about their currency, of which, as the colony grew and needed more money to do business, there was never enough. The colony after 1688 was forbidden to

¹ The history of the Woburn church subsequent to 1758 will be touched upon in a later chapter.

coin money, and the amount of British coinage brought in by newcomers or received in the course of trade was never sufficient for the needs of the people. Farmers had often to "work out" their taxes by labor on the roads or pay them in the produce of their farms. The town of Woburn often received for taxes or paid its own share of the colony taxes with shoes,¹ for already in the eighteenth century it was something of a "leather town" and a good many of its citizens understood the making of shoes and practiced the art in little shops beside or behind their houses.

Four times at least the General Court voted to "expand" the currency in order that there might be more money for the purposes of business and the payment of taxes. "Bills of credit" were first issued in 1690 to pay the expenses of the colony incurred in the Indian wars. There was a second emission in 1715. In 1721 the General Court authorized a "Province Loan" of £50,000, and seven years later another of £60,000. This money, in the form of bills of credit, was distributed among the several towns in proportion to their population and wealth, and was then loaned out by the towns to citizens who could give satisfactory security. The personal notes of these borrowers were the only form of security behind these bills. It would not be fair to call this an example of unrestrained inflation, however, for the loans had to be repaid to the town authorities and by them restored to the treasury within a certain number of years. Woburn availed itself of both these opportunities and was able to return its loan of 1721 promptly. It was not so fortunate with the second loan, not, we believe, through any dishonesty, but because borrowers found it harder and harder to repay what they had borrowed. Woburn was not the only town in this difficulty; there were many to keep it company. But it was the failure of these towns to make good on their loans, and the consequent loss of confidence in the bills of credit as properly secured money, which led to the steady depreciation of the paper currency, the dissatisfaction of the Rev. Mr. Jackson with his salary, and many other matters of greater consequence.

At this same time the General Court was persuaded to come to the rescue of the harassed town of Woburn by a gift of wild land between the settled towns of Lancaster and Groton, within

¹ Woburn Records, Vol. III, page 52.

the present boundaries of Lunenburg. There were two thousand acres in the grant; Woburn held the land for ten years, when a committee of the town, of which Josiah Johnson who lived, as has been already noticed, on or near Cambridge Street in the present Winchester was one, sold it for £3,300 to Israel Reed.

The colony bills of credit had so far sunk in value by 1734 that the paper money paid in by Israel Reed in settlement of his purchase was worth only £1,100 in coin instead of £3,300. Such as it was, however, the money was loaned out by the town's committee in various amounts to citizens of Woburn; and for a time the town prospered under this arrangement. The interest on its loans was for ten years sufficient to pay most if not all of its county and province taxes, and a great part of the town's expenses as well. But then politics crept in. The old committee of which Josiah Johnson was the head was turned out on the plea that it had not given sufficient security to the town for the fund it was administering. A new committee of nine took its place, but though the town meeting passed several votes requiring bonds from its members they were all evaded or subsequently rescinded.

Presently the committee began to be remiss about turning over the interest it was supposed to collect; money was becoming harder to get and its value was shrinking year by year. The town tried to use legal methods of collecting from borrowers who were behind in their interest, but by this time a great part, if not a majority, of the voters were themselves debtors to the fund, and saw to it that nothing really serious was done in town meeting. They were even able to defeat the sensible proposal that none of those who owed money to the town should be allowed to vote on questions affecting their debts. The town treasurer was instructed to proceed against the most incorrigible delinquents, but it does not appear that he ever did so. It was a time of financial distress; nearly everybody was in debt, and though the pleasant word "moratorium" had not yet made its appearance the principle it defines was well understood and widely practised. The town voted not to demand repayment of loans so long as the interest was kept up; that pointed to the eventual evaporation of the fund. By 1750 the depreciation had reduced its value to £440. Twenty years later it had shrunk to a third of that. The town at last began

to bring suits against delinquent debtors; it collected a little, but at discouraging cost. Then came the engrossing events of the Revolution. The Lunenburg fund was no longer of enough importance to be fought over, and in the smoke of Lexington and Concord and Bunker Hill it faded quite out of sight and is no more heard of.¹

The story of this fund may teach us that for all their virtues, public and private, our forefathers of the eighteenth century were not above making disastrous experiments with their currency, of playing politics with the public money, or of evading debts which they found it difficult to pay. Human nature changes but little, and a thoroughly honest man is still the noblest work of God — but not frequent enough in any century to lose his distinction among his fellow-men.

¹ A very full account of this episode is given in Sewall's *History of Woburn*, pages 284-301.

CHAPTER VI

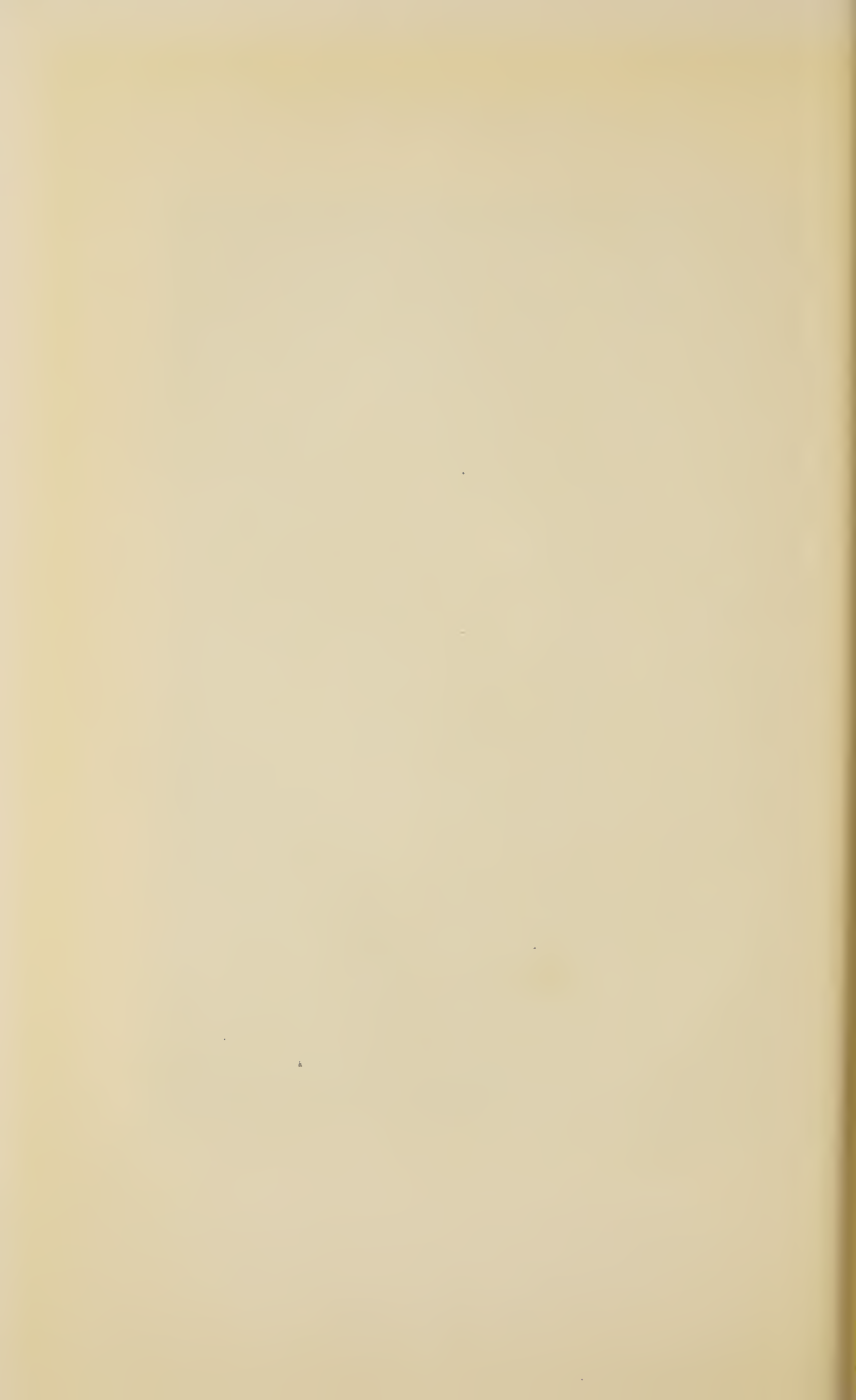
COLONIAL MILITIA AND PRIMITIVE SCHOOLS

THE Puritan towns of Massachusetts Bay were not content with organization civil and religious. There had to be military organization as well, for in a strange land, surrounded by savages who might at any time become dangerous, and threatened too by the hostility of the colonists of another nation in Canada, some preparation for defence with arms was considered highly necessary. From the first, therefore, there were militia companies in all the newly founded towns. These companies were patterned after the "train-bands" with which the colonists had been familiar in England. They were as all-inclusive as the church or the town meeting. Every male when he reached the age of eighteen was enrolled in the company as a matter of law. There was at first no age limit; men, if they were physically able, bore arms and drilled with their fellows not only till past the age of sixty years, but even till past seventy. The officers were very tenacious of their distinction. Like the politicians of whom Thomas Jefferson complained, "few died and none resigned." There is record of one militia captain of Concord who clung to his office until he was eighty-seven, though for several years before that he was confined to a wheel chair. Seated thus in state he would have himself trundled onto the training field "to view and order his company."

Training days were social events of the first importance. The entire male population was gathered for drill and exercise in marksmanship, usually on the common in the center of the town, and the women and children in great numbers used to attend as well, to enjoy the martial spectacle and make general holiday. In the early years the military training, still taken most seriously, was the central feature of the day. In later times — particularly after the Revolution — though training day still survived as a New England institution, it was in a degenerate form. Militia drill, on these occasions, became little more than a joke, and the day became



THE TREES OF WINCHESTER



rather an excuse for rustic merrymaking, attended by a variety of boisterous sports and a good deal of stout drinking.

The first captain of the Woburn company was Edward Johnson, who had had military experience in England and had brought the title of captain over to this country with him. John Carter was his lieutenant. On Captain Johnson's death Carter became captain, William Johnson lieutenant and James Converse (Sr.) ensign or sergeant. Observe that all three officers were men who have already been identified for the reader as residents within the present bounds of Winchester. The southern end of Woburn, though not strong in numbers, was evidently as militant on the field as it was orthodox in matters of religion, and its few residents were among the most forceful and influential citizens of the town.

John Carter remained captain till 1690, when he was well past seventy. In fact he had to be petitioned out of the captaincy, for there is on record a paper signed by fifty members of the Woburn company and addressed to the Governor and Council praying that Captain Carter be removed on account of "his great age and extraordinary deafness." The petition goes on to declare that on a recent occasion when the old man's son desired to inform his father that a "warrant for the press"¹ had been issued, he was obliged to shout so loud in his ear that many others in the street heard him, "upon which report the young man absconded."

There were other objections to Captain Carter too in the minds of the fifty petitioners. The colony had recently passed through a distressing experience. The old charter under which it had existed for fifty years, had been revoked by King Charles II because the General Court kept refusing to alter the laws so as to admit persons other than orthodox Congregationalists either to church communion or to the suffrage. Charles's successor, James II, sent Sir Edmund Andros over as royal governor, to rule with no responsibility save to the king himself. His government had been in many respects tyrannical, and the colonists had chafed under it. In 1689 James II was overthrown in England, and Sir Edmund was ousted from his office, but public opinion continued to be very

¹ An order from the General Court calling for the impressment of a certain number of citizens for military service outside the borders of the town — obviously a confidential matter until the warrant was posted.

bitter toward any who had recognized his authority while governor, or accepted commissions from him.

According to the petition referred to, Captain Carter had been altogether too complaisant toward the Andros government. He had taken a commission from it and had sought and profited by the influence with Sir Edmund of William Symmes of Charlestown, "under whose illegal actings," say the petitioners, "we have suffered for above two years." This charge needs a little explanation. The William Symmes in question, who was, of course, the same whom we have already seen building his home and spending his life on the banks of the Aberjona on the land granted to his father the Rev. Zechariah, was from the first inclined to go along with the new royal governor rather than to stand out against him. He chose the opposite course to that of William Johnson, lieutenant of the militia company, selectman of Woburn, former member of the Board of Assistants and conspicuous leader of the "patriot" cause. Mr. Symmes was one of the Justices of the Peace appointed by Sir Edmund for Middlesex County.

Now one of the Andros laws was that there should never be more than one town meeting in a year in any town, that it should transact no business except to elect town officers, and that it should be called not by the selectmen, but by Sir Edmund's Justices of the Peace. On two occasions, in 1687 and 1688, Woburn chose to disregard this law, and held its meeting in the old fashion on a day designated by long usage; and on the first occasion they elected William Johnson selectman and recorder, though he was in such bad odor with the Andros regime that he had shortly before been threatened with imprisonment for hesitating to take the oath of allegiance demanded of him.

Both elections were annulled by the king's officers in Boston, and the town had to submit to meet at the call of three of Sir Edmund's Justices of the Peace — one of whom was William Symmes. This was "illegal acting" spoken of in the petition for the removal of Captain Carter. His friendship with Symmes, and his submission to the royal governor were the chief of his offending. His "extraordinary deafness" might have been borne, but not his deference to King James's governor.

So we find him in 1690 removed or resigning from the cap-

taincy; it is not quite clear which. But the election that followed indicates the persistence of differences within the company — which means of course the entire citizenship of the town. Lieutenant William Johnson was the natural choice, but at first the company seems to have voted for James Converse, 2d¹ fifty-three to forty-seven. There is also on record another petition to the Governor and Council signed by seventy-eight men of Woburn protesting against the election on the ground that Johnson deserved the honor by reason of seniority in command, and had been deprived of it by what we should call tampering with the ballot box. "Among Converse's votes," says the petition, was that of "James Fowle, taken from the troopers and made an ensign over us by Sir Edmund. This man put in his vote; also one of his journeymen, who hath wrought his journey-work at Boston and came up to see his friends, and another of his men that stole our ammunition, and another man that liveth in Cambridge village and put in a vote; also Anthony Goffe that is now in prison for reflecting on their Majesties names. . . . Now take these votes from the 53 and add two or three sober men that are for Mr. Johnson, but came not to vote, and Mr. Johnson will have had as many votes as the other; but so it is, that rum and strong drink, with the help of a few prejudiced persons will in this way turn out those that are fit, loyal, virtuous and able . . . and put in those that have been the greatest compliers, and will if opportunity serve be so again; the which this town has had sufficient proof of, and especially Mr. Johnson, who felt the smart of it; for this James Converse did draw the heads of a petition against him, for one who presented it to Sir Edmund, and had like to have brought him into some trouble, had not the weakness of some justices prevented it."²

This petition must have produced its effect, for shortly thereafter we find William Johnson installed as captain and James Converse 2d no longer ensign, as he had been before. Johnson's term was a brief one, for within two years he withdrew to accept the office of major in the colony's service. His rival James Converse

¹ Afterwards Major Converse, whose military exploits were rehearsed in Chapter II.

² This whole interesting episode is described at length in a paper by William R. Cutter and Arthur G. Loring, read, it appears, before the old Winchester Historical Society and printed in the *Winchester Press* of October 25, 1901.

was at nearly the same time made a captain, and despatched on frontier service to Maine, where, as we have seen, he greatly distinguished himself.

These years from 1682 to 1690 were critical years for Massachusetts. They witnessed the loss of the old charter and the overthrow of the Puritan theocracy in which Church and State were firmly united, with the ministers the really controlling power. Massachusetts emerged a royal colony, no longer a Puritan commonwealth maintained and conducted for and by the elect. It gained (against the will of many) the advantages of freedom of worship and a broader democracy.¹ A town history is no place to go into the details of the long struggle, with all the political and theological passions it aroused; it does, however, illuminate the situation for us to find the forefathers of our town — Symmeses and Conversees and Johnsons and Carters — involved in the bickerings and animosities of the time, over so simple a matter as the choice of a captain for the rural militia company. Major Johnson appears, as the character handed down to us by his contemporaries would lead us to expect, the earnest champion of the old order and the old charter. William Symmes, John Carter and James Converse, we may suspect, were less convinced of the righteousness of theocracy, and more disposed to revert to the views of pre-Puritan Englishmen as to the subordination of the Church to the State in civil affairs.

By 1704 we find Major James Converse acting as captain of the Woburn company in succession to those other two Winchester men, John Carter and William Johnson. It was a time of great uneasiness on the frontier, and Converse was kept busy impressing men from his company for service against the Indians at Groton, Lancaster, Marlborough and other towns further west. Once in mid-winter he was called upon to raise sixty men for service on the frontier. The snow was so deep that no one could go on horseback, or afoot except on snowshoes. The major himself had not been as far as his next-door neighbor's in a fortnight. He was at his wits end; there were no more than twenty or thirty pairs of snowshoes in the town. But he commandeered those, and filled up his quota

¹ Those who are interested in following the story of the rise and fall of the old Puritan theocracy are recommended to read Brooks Adams's *Emancipation of Massachusetts*.

with men on horseback whom he hoped somehow or other to get through to the posts where they were wanted. A letter of his is extant in which he gives voice to his irritation at having impossibilities required of him.

"I am poor and old," he writes, in humble exaggeration, "and I am made the perpetual drudge of my superior officers. Nevertheless I am very ready and willing to do the utmost of my ability."¹

Not many years thereafter a second militia company was formed in Woburn and a third in the "Precinct" which later became the town of Burlington; the number of citizens due for service had so far increased that they were too many for a single company. Men who lived in Winchester territory were often in command of one or other of the Woburn companies — Josiah Converse, James Richardson, Robert Converse, Ebenezer Converse, Samuel Belknap, all held the rank of captain in the years previous to the Revolution.

In time of actual war the whole of a militia company was not called into service. That would have meant drawing off the entire male population into arms; no one would have been left to till the fields or protect the women and children in case of danger. Instead a certain number of men were "impressed" or volunteered from each town, and they were placed not under their own officers but under commanders specially named for the occasion by the General Court. So we find Major Johnson, though only a lieutenant in his home company, in command as a major over a body of soldiers sent to Billerica to chastise some Indians who had massacred a number of settlers in that town during King Philip's War in 1675. And we have also seen James Converse, who at the time was not an officer at all in the Woburn company, named captain to conduct the defence of the garrison at Wells in 1694 and gaining promotion to a majority by his services there.

The records show that fifty-eight Woburn men served in King Philip's War in 1675-76, in addition to Major Johnson and Captain Carter who acted as officers. Four Richardsons, John, Joseph, Samuel and Nathaniel, and Thomas Pierce are the names that appear clearly to be those of Winchester men. Lieutenant William

¹ W. R. Cutter and A. G. Loring, *Collections of the Winchester Historical Society*, printed in *Winchester Press*, Vol. II, No. 3.

Symmes was among those who served from Charlestown. He also, as we know, was a resident in Winchester territory. Several of these men were present at the Great Swamp fight in Rhode Island, fought December 16, 1675. This was the battle in which the power of Philip was broken and his fortified stronghold was taken and burned. Several hundred Indians were killed; more than eight white soldiers lost their lives, and a hundred and fifty were wounded, one of whom was Nathaniel Richardson of our town.

There is no evidence that any other dwellers on Winchester land except Major James Converse saw important service in King William's War (so called) from 1688 to 1698. Thomas Pierce and John Richardson, who appear to have lived within Winchester bounds, were, however, among the twenty-four Woburn men who served in Sir William Phips's ill-fated expedition against Quebec in 1690, and Captain James Richardson, a descendant of Thomas, whose homestead in later years was in the vicinity of what is now the Mystic Valley Parkway, just east of Washington Street, is said to have won credit and his military title in "employment against the Indians in Maine."

Men from our community took a very active part in Captain Lovewell's famous fight with the savages on that same Maine frontier in 1725. This dramatic little battle — there were only thirty-four white men engaged — occurred during one of those occasional outbursts of violence which punctuated almost a century of irritation along the northern frontier of New England, where the English settlers were in continual friction with hostile Indians who fought with French encouragement. Captain Lovewell's band was not a regular military force; Lovewell, who was a Dunstable man, raised it to take advantage of a rather barbarous offer of £100 for every Indian scalp delivered in Boston, which the Great and General Court of Massachusetts made in 1724. He and his company of volunteers thereupon set out on a profit-making campaign and returned from one expedition into New Hampshire with ten scalps, for which they duly collected the generous sum of £1,000.

In April 1725 he and his men set forth on another raid into the Indian country. They made their way unmolested as far as the Saco River in what is now the town of Fryeburg, Maine, a town named for the chaplain of the Lovewell band, who died of

the wounds he received in the battle I am to describe. By this time their numbers were reduced to thirty-four, several men having been left as a rear guard at Great Ossipee Pond, New Hampshire. Of these Noah Johnson,¹ Thomas Richardson, Timothy Richardson, Ichabod Johnson, Josiah Johnson and Ensign Seth Wyman bear names familiar in the history of Woburn and Winchester. The three Johnsons and Ensign Wyman were all grandsons of Major William Johnson of whom we have heard so often.

By the morning of May 8 they had reached the shores of a good-sized pond, called Lovewell's pond to this day. Hearing a gun discharged and catching sight of a single Indian standing on a headland that projected into the pond, the party started in pursuit of him, leaving their packs with provisions and spare ammunition at their camp. They caught their Indian, but in their absence a band of Indians more numerous than themselves discovered their camp, seized the baggage they had left behind, and laid a careful ambush for the returning white men. Into this ambush they fell; Captain Lovewell and nine others were killed almost at the first volley. The rest, led by Seth Wyman, who now took command, took what shelter they could, with the waters of the pond behind them to prevent an attack from the rear. For ten hours a desultory fight went on, both redskins and white men shooting from behind rocks and trees. One of the white men, John Chamberlain of Groton, in the course of the fight came face to face with Paugus, a famous chief of the New Hampshire Indians. The two men, glaring at each other, loaded, primed and fired their muskets at the same moment. Paugus fell dead; his bullet creased Chamberlain's skull as it passed.

The Indians withdrew at nightfall; forty or more of the seventy who comprised their party were left dead on the field. Fourteen of the colonists were killed or died of their wounds. One was missing and never heard from; another whose name is charitably concealed was a deserter. The survivors made their way to the "fort" they had left on Ossipee Pond, but the men stationed there, alarmed by the report of the deserter, who represented that the entire company of white men had been wiped out, had decamped

¹ Noah Johnson had moved to Dunstable. When in later years land in the present town of Pembroke, N. H. was granted to survivors of Lovewell's fight he removed thither and died in New Hampshire when almost a hundred years old.

with most of the provisions. Sixteen men led by Ensign (later Captain) Wyman made their way back to Dunstable by forced marches of terrible hardship through the forest wilderness. Four others, whose wounds would not permit them to keep up with the main party, struck out for the English settlements at Saco and Berwick. Only two of them arrived there; the other two, one of whom was Chaplain Frye, died on the way.

Of the eighteen men who returned alive only nine had escaped painful and serious wounds. Wyman and Thomas Richardson were among these nine. Ichabod Johnson was among those killed.¹ Noah Johnson, Timothy Richardson and Josiah Johnson were all severely wounded and bore the marks of the battle through life.

We have no evidence that any from our part of old Woburn were enlisted in the expedition of New England colonial troops which, under the command of Colonel William Pepperell, took the fortress of Louisburg from the French in 1745.

In the French and Indian War which lasted from 1755 to 1763 a number of soldiers from Winchester territory were engaged, mainly in General Abercrombie's campaign for the capture of Montreal by way of Lakes George and Champlain. Among them we recognize the names of Josiah Johnson, William and Ebenezer Locke and several members of the Richardson family, one of whom was Abel Richardson, who became by purchase the owner of the old Converse house and mill. Of him we shall have more to say later.

Abel Richardson was a member of Captain Osgood's company of Colonel Nicholl's Massachusetts regiment, which marched in 1758 to support the British regulars in Abercrombie's campaign against Fort Ticonderoga, then in the possession of the French. The unmilitary appearance of the colonial troops on this occasion was a source of much merriment to the British officers at Albany. "It would have relaxed the gravity of an anchorite," wrote one observer, "to have seen the descendants of the Puritans marching through our streets . . . some with short coats, some with long, some with no coats at all, in colors as varied as the rainbow; some with their hair cropped like Cromwell's soldiers, others wearing

¹ His father Edward Johnson, who lived in Burlington, is said to have died of grief at his son's loss.

wigs whose curls flowed . . . about their shoulders. Their march, their accoutrements . . . furnished great amusement to the wits of the British army."¹

One of those wits was a medical officer named Shackburg. He exercised his gift of humor by composing a set of doggerel verses, set to a lively air, the origin of which is obscure. Dr. Shackburg called his production "Yankee Doodle." He is said to have gravely recommended the tune to the principals as a "celebrated martial air," and he and his witty friends were beyond measure delighted when the militiamen fell for the joke and began diligently to perform "Yankee Doodle" upon their fifes and drums. The joke was turned against its authors not much more than twenty years later, when Cornwallis surrendered his troops at Yorktown to the merry music of Captain Shackburg's satirical song. It is something to remember — is it not — that a Winchester man (and perhaps more than one) was present at the birth of the oldest of American patriotic tunes, though whether he wore a long coat or a short one, and whether his hair was cropped or hidden beneath a wig we do not, alas, know.²

One very serious effect of these frequently repeated and almost continuous wars with the French and the Indians was the burden of debt it left on the colonists of Massachusetts Bay. War is always costly; to a poor and struggling community it is pretty nearly ruinous. Sir William Phips's expedition to Quebec cost a great deal of money, to no purpose. The year after it broke down, the colony or province tax was increased by £24,000, an immense sum for those simple days. Woburn's share went up from £32 in 1689 to £532 in 1691, and the hard-working farmers along the Aberjona suddenly found their tax bills *twenty-three* times what they were accustomed to pay. Let Winchester taxpayers of today try to imagine what that must have meant! It was at this time that the colony, in order to pay its bills, was driven to issuing the unsecured or ill-secured notes called bills of credit, a device to which it had to resort again and again during the eighteenth century as the accounts for other military ventures were presented, until as we

¹Historical Collections, Farmer and Moore, Vol. III, pages 217-218.

²A very interesting diary of this campaign was kept by Lieut. Samuel Thompson of Woburn; it is printed in the Appendix of Sewall's History of Woburn. The campaign was a failure, but in the very next year General Wolfe took Quebec, and Canada passed into the hands of the English.

saw in the previous chapter the paper currency of Massachusetts approached more and more close to zero in value. The French and Indian War cost £818,000 sterling and nearly £500,000 had to be paid by the colony out of its own narrow funds. The result was another increase of taxation almost fourfold in amount. That the burden was borne with so little complaint is evidence of the sturdy character of the people, who were willing to sacrifice not their lives only but their property — of which human beings are often more thrifty — in order to defend their independence against a persistent and dangerous enemy.

We have seen our forefathers clearing the wilderness, cultivating the soil, laying out roads, building churches — and sometimes squabbling passionately over their ministers — setting up mills, training a soldiery and making war. What, meanwhile, were they doing for the education of their young? Surprisingly little, in view of the venerable tradition that New England was built on its churches and its schools. As a matter of fact, education — except for those young men who were destined to become clergymen — was long taken very casually by our ancestors. There is no record of any public school in Woburn until 1673, when “Goodwife Converse” — not the wife of any of our Winchester Converses but of a distant kinsman, Allen Converse — was engaged to teach the small children their ABCs for the magnificent remuneration of ten shillings! For many years this was the standard wage of the good women who from time to time were engaged for the purpose. There were no schoolhouses. The women taught the small fry that presented themselves in a room in their own houses, and school kept for only a few months in each year.

Little was taught save reading and writing and the simplest rules of arithmetic; the instructors had no further knowledge themselves. What the children in the Waterfield part of Woburn did for an education we cannot tell. They lived two miles or more from such small educational opportunities as the town offered, for the school was kept in Woburn center. It is not likely that many of them trudged so far every day, though children made less of walking long distances to school in the early days than they do today.

The probability is that most of the boys and girls of our community in the seventeenth century — and much of the eighteenth — learned to read and spell and write at their mother's knee, or at most in a little "dame school," kept by some worthy widow or spinster in one room of the family house, in exchange for a small fee paid by the parents of the children she instructed. Such schools were common in early New England; they persisted even into the nineteenth century.¹ There may have been some in the rural settlement that was eventually to become the town of Winchester, but they have left no record.

It is certain that the people of an old New England farming community neither asked nor expected more than the rudiments of education. If a man could read, write and cipher a little, it was enough. In 1686 Woburn had grown to have one hundred families, and was by law required to keep a "grammar school," but it was several years before even a single scholar offered himself for more advanced instruction. As late as 1704 the grammar schoolmaster was rarely expected to be in attendance except at such times as the County Court was sitting — in order to guard against having the town "presented" by the grand jury for failing to maintain such a school as the law required. For however indifferent the colonists might be with regard to primary schools, they never forgot that grammar schools were essential to an educated ministry, and the clergy — who still controlled the government — were careful to see that no town shirked its obligations under the law in that direction.

Gradually the grammar school of Woburn acquired pupils and came to have settled and often competent masters. In 1713 a schoolhouse — the first in the town — was built at the center, though it was paid for by private subscription and not with public money. It was a small building of course, furnished with rough wooden benches and a great flag-bottomed chair in which the master was enthroned. But for a good many years — quite regularly until 1742 at least, and occasionally thereafter until 1760 — the grammar school did not always abide in the new schoolhouse. Woburn, when Burlington was still a part of it, as well as the

¹ For a description of such a school, which existed as recently as 1860, see *Old Salem Days*, by Eleanor Putnam.

greater part of present-day Winchester and Wilmington, was a town of magnificent distances, and it was thought no more than fair that the school should be moved about from time to time into the outlying quarters of the town so that scholars from those districts might for part of the year at least find it conveniently located for their attendance. Now and again, therefore, its sessions were held for a month or two in some house within our Winchester borders, a part of which had been hired for the purpose by the town selectmen. Thus in 1728 the records show that school was held for a time at Thomas Belknap's, which was on Main Street, near the northern border of the present Winchester. At another time it was accommodated at Sergeant Thomas Reed's on Cambridge Street. In 1738 it was held "in the southerly part of Richardson's Row, the selectmen to state the place"; and in 1742 it "took up" at Mr. Ebenezer Converse's in lower Church Street.¹

This migratory school-keeping was obviously something of a hardship on the schoolmaster, and the town, in recognition of that fact, usually voted that the inhabitants of the districts into which he had to move must supply him with a horse "on which to ride to meeting," if they wished to entertain the school. Once, at least, we find Master James Fowle, a teacher widely respected and beloved in Woburn for many years, as much for his force of character and powers of discipline as for his book learning, petitioning the town for some increase in his salary "in consideration of the fatigues he hath had by reason of there being so many removals of the school." He failed to get his allowance, but the general appreciation of the injustice to both teacher and pupils involved in the system led to its permanent abandonment not long afterward. After 1760 the grammar school kept only in the schoolhouse at the center, or in another that had been built in the "precinct," which later became the town of Burlington.²

Meanwhile what was being done for primary instruction in the town? Little enough. For many years Woburn ceased altogether to appropriate money for that purpose — not even the beggarly ten shillings that had formerly been paid to "Goodwife Converse"

¹ Woburn Records, Vol. VII, page 267.

² For information about Woburn schools much dependence is placed on a careful article on the subject prepared by Rev. Leander Thompson and printed in the Woburn town reports for 1876.

and her successors. It is clear that during all the years between 1707 and 1760 parents who wanted their children to learn to read and write had to maintain a little private school by subscription. True, the cost cannot have been excessive, to judge by the terms that the town had driven with its female school teachers in earlier days; probably two or three pounds, or a little more after the currency had begun to depreciate, was all the mistress of a dame school could expect, and divided among ten or a dozen families that sum would not make education unduly expensive.

But in 1761 the town meeting awoke to its responsibilities at last. Money was appropriated for the "grammar and other schools in the town," and one fourth of the amount, or £100 in the depreciated currency of the day, was to be "divided equally between the extreme parts of the First Parish, provided they hire some suitable person to keep a school . . . for their children." The same vote was passed pretty regularly thereafter, and as the southern part of Woburn — the district which is now Winchester — was specifically mentioned we may suppose that some sort of public school was maintained here after 1761. There was no schoolhouse at first — none was built before 1794. The kitchens or best rooms of this farmhouse or that in the neighborhood must still have served as a schoolroom. The teacher was perhaps the same worthy goodwife or widow who had taught the little private school. The money for her pay, collected from the town treasury, was disbursed by the neighbors who had engaged her services, and there is therefore no existing record on the town books concerning the names of the teachers or the places where they taught. A school system worthy of the name was still to come, but at least after one hundred and twenty years, the little village by the Aberjona had a public school!

CHAPTER VII

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY MEMORIES. THE BLACK HORSE TAVERN

WE saw a few pages back that the Woburn grammar school, during its migratory period, was held for a time in 1728 in Mr. Thomas Belknap's house. That introduces us to a family which was conspicuous in Winchester history during the eighteenth century. Thomas Belknap, the first in our town, was a native of Boston and a glover by occupation. He removed to Woburn in 1698 and bought the land known as the "Forty-pound Meadow," which stretched northward along the road which is now Main Street, from a point not far from the line that now divides Woburn from Winchester. His house was on the Winchester side, where the old house of Mr. James Russell still stands, at the corner of Main Street and Russell Road. Belknap also bought from members of the Converse family land on the westerly side of the road running up to Horn Pond. The brook that flows out of the pond to the Aberjona ran through Belknap's land, and he soon made use of its waters by building a dam, digging a ditch or canal, and putting up first a fulling mill and then a grist-mill along this ditch. The mill privilege thus established is, next to those of the Converse and Symmes families already spoken of, the oldest in Winchester, and it was continuously used for water power for almost two hundred years. The dam and the mills stood near the foot of Canal Street where the buildings of the Eastern Felt Company are located today. They remained in the possession of one or another member of the Belknap family — Samuel, the son of Thomas, or William and Samuel, his grandsons,¹ and Josiah his great-grandson — until 1787. Not long afterward the family disappeared from Winchester; several of its members removed to Newburgh, New York, and from this branch were derived two distinguished soldiers,

¹ There was an intricate succession of land transfers connected with this property. Mr. W. R. Cutter describes them all in an article in the Winchester Record, Vol. II, page 266. See also an article on page 272 concerning the genealogy of the Belknap family.

General William G. Belknap, who won his rank by able service in the war with Mexico, and his son, General William W. Belknap, who, after holding high command in the Civil War, was Secretary of War during the presidency of General Grant.

A martial spirit seems to have been hereditary among the Belknaps; the most eminent of the family while it still lived in the part of Woburn that is now Winchester was Captain Samuel Belknap, the grandfather and great-grandfather of the two generals just mentioned. He was for many years the commander of one of the three militia companies in Woburn — the “West” company, and he saw several years of military service in the Revolution at the head of this company or detachments from it. We shall hear more of him when the part of our town in the Revolution is described. Captain Belknap was also a representative in the General Court in 1781 and 1783, and was altogether a man of mark and consideration. He was one of those who removed to Newburgh, after the war, and there he died.

A singular member of this family was an eccentric spinster, who according to tradition was called “Witch Belknap.” Strange stories used to be told around Winchester firesides, almost two hundred years ago, concerning the mysterious powers of this woman. She used, it seems, to haunt the fields through which Cross Street then ran, and constituted herself the special guardian of the gate which in those days had to be opened when any vehicle or horseman wished to pass through the lane — for it was hardly more than that.

It was reported — and believed — that once when a rider leaped his horse over the gate instead of opening it the “witch” suddenly appeared out of the bushes, jumped upon the horse’s back, and steadying herself with her hands upon the rider’s shoulders rode so, nearly half a mile to Richardson’s Row, to the astonishment and terror of both man and horse, the animal galloping wildly all the way. When the witch jumped down she cried out to the rider that she would see him again when he passed that way — which she did, according to the man’s account, in the form of a crow that pecked viciously at his eyes.

Again, so the gossips said, a man driving an ox cart through the lane stopped to pick up a loose rail that had fallen from one

of the Belknap fences and threw it on his cart. Instantly the witch appeared, the wheels of the cart sank several inches into the ground, and the oxen could not move it until the rail had been thrown off on the ground, at which the witch screamed with laughter and clapped her hands!

Such were the tales told of Witch Belknap, who was no doubt merely a queer, half-demented female whose strange dress, piercing black eyes and singular aversion to the company of other human beings excited the awe and suspicion of the superstitious. The late Nathaniel A. Richardson used to say that his own grandfather, who as a boy had absorbed all the whispered nonsense about the woman's supernatural powers, firmly believed to his dying day that she was a bona fide witch.¹ If it seems strange that hard-headed folk should have credited such superstitions, remember that it was not so many years before this that the witchcraft delusion swept Massachusetts, and caused the death of not a few innocent persons who were accused of commerce with the Evil One.

To return for a moment to the fortunes of the Belknap mill site on Horn Pond Brook, it passed for several years to the ownership of Duncan Ingraham who operated the gristmill there. In 1802 it was bought by the Middlesex Canal Company; the canal passed within a short distance of the mill. The company disposed of it thirteen years later, and the land had a succession of different owners until 1847 when it was purchased by Church and Lane. The old gristmill and fulling mill had already passed away; the new owners established on their site a manufactory of pianoforte cases. In 1865 the business passed to a new firm, Cowdery, Cobb and Nichols, which supplemented the old water power with the use of steam.

The old Belknap house, after the family had moved away, was for a number of years used as a tavern; Nathaniel Davis who moved here from Weston was the inn keeper. It was to Davis's tavern that the bodies of two Woburn men, Benjamin and Joseph Brooks, were brought after they had been found frozen to death on Horn Pond Mountain. They had gone up the mountain to cut wood on January 9, 1810. That was a bitterly cold day; people spoke of it

¹ N. A. Richardson's scrapbook now in the possession of the Winchester Historical Society.

for years afterward as the "Cold Friday." The men perhaps tried to keep the frost out of their blood by the internal application of Medford rum, and carried the treatment too far. Whether or not an injustice is done them by such a suggestion, the fact is that they did not return home when they were expected, and a searching party discovered their bodies lying in the snow, frozen stiff.

While the enterprising Thomas Belknap was operating his new mills on Horn Pond Brook — let us hope at a reasonable profit — the venerable Converse gristmill at the center of the village passed into new hands. The purchaser of the mill and the old house across the road was David Wyman, a stirring citizen of Woburn, who was the first to bring into Winchester territory a name long and honorably connected with our town. Wymans were among the very first settlers of Woburn. The brothers John and Francis, farmers by trade, were the first to engage in the business of tanning leather in the town and were among its leading citizens. David was the grandson of John, and a grandson also of that Samuel Richardson whose wife and children were massacred by the Indians, as you have read. His own wife was a granddaughter of Thomas Richardson, one of the three brothers who were among the earliest settlers in Winchester, and it was through her that he first became a landholder in the Winchester region of Woburn. David Wyman was a man of importance in his day, nine times a selectman, whose wise counsel was often sought by his neighbors in both public and private affairs.

He was an indefatigable buyer and seller of real estate, and at one time or another owned a great part of the land along the country road (now Main Street). Besides the old Converse homestead, he owned for a time much of the land toward Horn Pond, including some of the original Belknap farm, and he or his sons were for years owners of the Black Horse Tavern, of which more will presently be said. His son, also named David, was the first to keep an inn in that famous old house, and after his death he was succeeded by his brother James.

A third brother was Paul Wyman, whose distinction it was to keep the first store within the present limits of Winchester. This little shop stood at the junction of Main and Washington streets, pretty nearly on the site of the house of the late Charles E. Kendall.

It was doing business at least as early as 1770, and probably before that. Mr. Wyman dealt in but few commodities — tea, molasses, brown sugar, salt fish, a few spices and plenty of New England rum were the chief of his stock. In later years his son Jesse, who continued the business until 1830, no doubt added shoes, calico, and a wider selection of groceries, such as became an old-fashioned “general store.”

Paul Wyman was famous hereabouts for his unusual strength. Not an especially large man, he had a powerful frame and muscles of iron. One example of his strength has been preserved by tradition. A big, broad-shouldered teamster from New Hampshire was on this occasion bringing a sledload of dressed hogs to the Boston market and put up overnight at the Black Horse Tavern, not far down the road from Paul Wyman’s store. After supper the stranger began to boast to the patrons of the tavern bar of his great strength. “I have two hogs on my sled that weigh 450 pounds apiece,” he said. “I can lift one of them off the sled, lay it down on the snow, pick it up again and put it back on the sled.” This indeed he did, when the bystanders challenged him to make good his words. Just then Paul Wyman walked into the tavern yard. His neighbors told him what the big teamster had done, and urged him to show the man what a really strong fellow could do.

Mr. Wyman thereupon picked up one of the hogs, carried it into the barroom and laid it down on the floor. He then went back to the sled, lifted the other hog and carried that into the barroom too. Then he took them both — one at a time — outdoors again, and called for a piece of rope. He made an end of the rope fast around each hog, bent down, and passed the middle of the rope over his neck and shoulders. He then carefully and deliberately straightened himself, lifted both animals off the ground and walked with them to the sled fifty feet away.¹

There is of course no documentary proof of this exploit; it may be only a “tall story,” its stature exaggerated through frequent repetition, but it could be told only of a man who was remarkable for his physical strength.

Sarah Wyman, a granddaughter of David the elder, was the heroine of a veritable Enoch Arden story, the memory of which is

¹ N. A. Richardson’s Recollections.

preserved among her descendants to this day. Sarah Wyman was married in 1770 to Ichabod Richardson, one of the family of which we have heard so much. Her husband was one of the first to enlist in the Revolution, and was one of the crew of a Yankee privateer fitted out to prey on British commerce. Somehow he got himself captured, was carried a prisoner to England, and was "pressed,"



AN ANCIENT GRIST-MILL

so tradition has it, into the British service. At all events he disappeared, and was never heard from until after the end of the war. In the meantime his wife, having given him up for dead, married, in 1782, his distant cousin Josiah Richardson. They had not long lived together as man and wife when, behold, the missing Ichabod reappeared in the flesh, to the astonishment of all and the obvious embarrassment of his supposed widow and her new husband. There was, however, but one thing to do. Sarah Richardson returned to her first and only lawful husband. She survived only

three or four years; Josiah did not again essay wedlock after his unlucky experience.¹

During his occupancy of the Converse house David Wyman must have rebuilt the old mill, or built a new one, for when, in 1773, the property was sold to Abel Richardson the mill was the two-story structure that remained a familiar object in the center for many years. Abel Richardson, the new proprietor of the grist-mill and occupant of the ancient Converse house, we have met before, serving at Ticonderoga when "Yankee Doodle" was written and drawing out of the waters of the Aberjona the lifeless body of Hannah Shiner, the last Winchester Indian. This Abel Richardson appears to have been one of those salty characters once common in old New England towns, now, alas, rarely met with. It is related of him that once being angered with his wife, who had forgotten to perform some duty about the house with which he had charged her, he declared "she should be chastised with the word of God." Thereupon he put the big family Bible into a meal sack and laid it so upon the poor woman's back that she ran screaming out of the house.

He had, it is said, a practical joker's sense of humor. On one occasion a traveler, passing by his house and hearing some golden robins singing sweetly in the great elm tree that overhung it, asked Abel to catch one for him and have it ready for him when he should return that way a few days later. The traveler appeared in due time and Abel handed him a good-sized box, which, he said, contained a beautiful singer; the box, he added, must not be opened until the man reached his home in Charlestown. By the time the traveler had got to Medford, however, certain sounds proceeding from the box aroused his suspicions. He opened it, and was chagrined to find inside a large green frog — a lusty singer indeed, but not of the range or pitch he had bargained for.

Abel Richardson had a daughter, who was universally called "Molly Abel." This woman, who never married, was long a familiar figure about Winchester streets. She was a singular person in manners and appearance, but capable in a sick room, and for years she was relied upon by her neighbors as a visiting nurse. Molly inherited some of her father's peculiarities. We are told that when

¹ Richardson Memorial, pages 247, 267.

he once forbade her to attend a dance at the Black Horse Tavern, and locked up her best dress so that she might not disobey him, she retaliated by throwing three or four large cheeses, which had been laid by for the winter's provender, into the pigpen for the animals to dine upon.¹

Abel Richardson maintained the old gristmill until he was an old man, but then it fell into neglect. Neighborhood gristmills were no longer so essential after 1800, and a more enterprising miller, Joseph Richardson by name, had in 1787 built a new mill on Horn Pond Brook, below the old Belknap mill, on the site which in later years was occupied by that of Stephen and Henry Cutter. Business deserted the old Converse-Richardson mill, though only for a time, for as we shall see later there was still a fairly busy industrial life in store for it.

I have had occasion in the course of this narrative to make several references to the Black Horse Tavern. It is high time to devote some space to this historic house. It was built previous to 1728 — but not more than a year or two previous — and it stood on the easterly side of Main Street at the corner of Black Horse Terrace, the roadway of which was, anciently, the driveway to the tavern stables. The tavern was only a few rods north of the line that divided Woburn from Medford; it was the first house in the former town as one entered it from the south. The land on which the house stood was originally Converse property. It was in 1724 that William Richardson bought from Robert Converse some eight or ten acres along the country road; a few months later he bought twenty-two acres more, lying behind this lot and further up the hill toward the present Highland Avenue, from the widow of Captain James Richardson, a veteran of the Indian wars, lately dead. This made up the farm that was long connected with the tavern.²

At some time between 1724 and 1728 William Richardson built on this land beside the country road (Main Street) by far the most pretentious house that the little community that was to become Winchester had yet seen. Richardson called it his "man-

¹ From the reminiscences of N. A. Richardson in the Winchester Historical Society's Collections.

² The deeds are on file in the Middlesex County Records.

sion house" and the title is fairly descriptive. The building was nearly square, and the front, which faced Main Street, was forty feet or more in length. There were two full stories of good height, four chimneys, and the low-pitched roof was bordered on all four sides by an ornamental railing. It had entrances on both the south and west fronts. Our picture of it, taken in its later years of neglect, nevertheless shows it as a rather imposing dwelling designed with some taste.

It was not originally meant to be a tavern; when in 1728 Richardson sold it, as perhaps too expensive a mansion for his use, the purchaser was Captain Isaac Dupee, a resident of Boston, who was a prosperous man, a merchant or money lender (or both). While he lived in his "mansion house" he was a leading citizen of Woburn, a pew holder in the First Church and a member of various committees of the town.¹ Captain Dupee was an officer in one of the cavalry regiments which were, in the eighteenth century, organized quite outside the local militia system, its members recruited from various towns for the defence of the colony. The memory is preserved of at least one occasion when Captain Dupee entertained the members of his regiment with lavish hospitality at his handsome home in "South Woburn." The spectacle of the troopers in gay regimentals riding to and from the house, swords rattling, spurs jingling and bugles singing made a deep impression on the homespun folk of this little rural hamlet; old men who as boys had witnessed it used often to recall the scene.²

In 1743 Captain Dupee removed elsewhere, and his house was bought by David Wyman the younger. From this time the "mansion house" was frankly a tavern. It is said that Captain Dupee, while he owned the house, was accustomed now and then to lodge well-appearing travelers who were passing over the road to and from Boston, but David Wyman made no pretence of being anything but an inn holder. He is so referred to in his will — he died in 1751 — and in that instrument he calls his house the Black Horse Tavern. Very likely he gave it that name when he first opened it eight years earlier as a place of public entertainment

¹ Especially in connection with the Lunenburg Loan Fund, Sewall's History of Woburn, page 290.

² N. A. Richardson, in his thorough article on the Black Horse Tavern, in the *Winchester Star* for September 24, 1892.

and hung upon a corner of the building the swinging sign that bore the image of a coal black steed trotting gaily away to an unknown destination. That sign remained exposed to sun, wind and rain for nearly a hundred years. At some uncertain time it was transferred from the house itself to a post beside the road, and still later it was fastened to the large elm tree, the somewhat shattered remains of which still stand on the southerly corner of Black Horse Terrace.

The tavern remained a place of public entertainment almost a hundred years — until 1835. The Wymans were succeeded as landlords by the Pierces, Joseph and Thomas, who were members of the old Woburn family of that name. In 1773 Thomas Pierce sold the inn to Noah Wyman, a distant relative of the first keeper of the tavern. On Noah Wyman's death in 1789 — or not long thereafter — the house and farm were bought by Simon Elliot of Boston who already held a considerable mortgage upon it; for though Wyman was a popular host, he was not a careful layer-up of the goods of this world.

In 1792 we find Zechariah Symmes in possession of the tavern. He was one of three brothers, descendants of Lieutenant William Symmes, who had moved northward from the ancestral acres in Medford and were now citizens of Woburn. It was another Zechariah, a nephew of him who kept the Black Horse for fourteen years, who lived on the rising ground above the Aberjona, where the town high school now stands. His daughter Nancy (Mrs. Henry W. Howe) bequeathed the land to the town to be used for a public library building, but in their wisdom the town fathers chose to put the school building there instead.

Wyman Weston of Reading bought the tavern of Zechariah Symmes's heirs in 1806. He was a good landlord and, assisted by a very capable wife, maintained the reputation of the tavern, which was known all over Massachusetts as one of the best of rural taverns. Mrs. Weston had a ready tongue, so it is said. It is related of her that when a guest, stopping at the Black Horse, ventured to rally her on the fact that she was childless, she put him in his place by replying that that was doubtless a blessing, for if she had children "they might have turned out to have as little breeding and manners as himself, which would be a great calamity!"¹

¹ N. A. Richardson's article in the *Star*, September 24, 1892.

In 1827 Weston, having experienced religion, gave up selling liquor at the tavern, and in the next year — perhaps because his temperance principles affected his business adversely — he sold the tavern to Joshua Davis. This man was the last of the Black Horse landlords. The building of the Boston and Lowell railroad (1832) had already begun to make the business of conducting a wayside inn precarious, and when Davis died in 1835 the purchaser of the house, Noah Johnson, showed no disposition to continue a decaying enterprise.

On Davis's gravestone in the old Woburn cemetery is inscribed this classic of New England epitaphs:

“Afflictions sore, long time I bore,
Physicians were in vain,
Till God was pleased my breath to take,
And ease me of my pain.”

Through all its long history the Black Horse Tavern was a successful and well-managed hostelry. It was a favorite stopping place for travelers overtaken by darkness or bad weather on their way to and from Boston, and it was especially well patronized by farmers on their way to the city market with timber, firewood or such varied country produce as grain, cheeses, fresh vegetables, poultry, hams and dressed meat. These men often came from surprising distances, not merely from the towns along the Merrimac in Massachusetts and New Hampshire but all the way from the Connecticut River Valley, and even from Vermont, and they provided the landlords of the Black Horse with much of their custom.

When stage lines were established to the northward, the coaches often made regular stops at the tavern, though the famous Fowle Tavern, which was in Woburn Square where the Savings Bank now stands, was an active competitor, and was frequently the preferred place for coach passengers to descend and eat — or drink — since it was at a more convenient distance from Boston.

From the Old Farmers' Almanacs we learn that Woburn and South Woburn (Winchester) were in 1775 on the “upper” stage route to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and in 1792 and 1797 they are set down as on the upper road to Portland, Maine. The stages in those days followed the old road from Woburn to Andover



THE BLACK HORSE TAVERN



through the eastern part of Wilmington, and thence ran to Haverhill, Exeter and either Dover or Portsmouth. In 1812 Woburn is mentioned as on the regular stage route to Amherst, New Hampshire, and on the main road from Boston to Montreal and Quebec. The Black Horse no doubt got its share of the business passing over these routes.

But it is for the old tavern's social influence on the straggling little village that was to become Winchester that we are chiefly interested in it. For the first time this quiet community of farms, without church or schoolhouse, had a place for its citizens to foregather, talk, exchange opinions and indulge in blameless social gaieties. In the well-stocked bar the men could gather of an evening to discuss the stirring events of the French wars, the Revolution or the period of the making of the Constitution, and when great matters failed, to talk over the humble affairs of their local community. Over the bar was a good-sized hall, which was in frequent use for public meetings, dances, singing schools and neighborhood gatherings. The tavern was the most important institution hereabouts; as is apparent from the fact that for a time it actually gave its name to the settlement around it. During the latter half of the eighteenth century Winchester was most frequently called Black Horse Village.

In Revolutionary times the tavern was the meeting place for soldiers as well as citizens. When the Committee of Safety and Supplies met at Cooper's Tavern in Arlington on the night of April 18, 1775, it adjourned to meet next day "in Woburn," and it is supposed that the Black Horse was the intended place. The meeting was never held, for on that next day came the fighting at Lexington and Concord, and the honorable committeemen were otherwise engaged. Military companies or detachments were assembled or dismissed at the tavern. I have before me the copy of an ancient document preserved in the government archives at Washington. It is the application for a pension made by one Timothy Wakefield of Reading who served for three months in 1778 at Bunker Hill "guarding the prisoners" from Burgoyne's army, defeated at Saratoga in the previous year. Wakefield sets forth that his commander was Captain Jesse Wyman of Woburn, and that when the company's term of service was over Captain Wyman

marched the men to Woburn and there dismissed them "at a place called the Black Horse Tavern." The inn was then kept by the captain's kinsman Noah Wyman. We are not told but we may guess that there was some liberal drinking of healths in the Black Horse bar on that occasion.

Another interesting document that has survived is the order addressed by the Adjutant General of the Commonwealth to Captain Jonas Richardson of Woburn on September 10, 1786. Captain Richardson's company was called out to assist in putting down that short-lived uprising in western Massachusetts that was dignified by the name of Shays's Rebellion. In this order the captain is directed to "assemble his company at the Black Horse Tavern," which in due course he did, though he led them not much further, there being no occasion for their services.

For many years it was an article of faith with Winchester folk that the original Baldwin apple tree grew on the farm later occupied by Samuel Thompson, just south of Black Horse. For this belief they had no less an authority than Brooks, the historian of Medford, who positively asserts it to be so. According to his account, those two very distinguished sons of Woburn, Colonel Loammi Baldwin and Benjamin Thompson (afterward Count Rumford) attended, as young men, the natural history lectures of Professor Winthrop at Harvard College. So much is certainly true. On their way to and from Cambridge on foot, the young fellows, he says, often paused at the tavern for refreshment. Nothing is more likely; Mrs. Wyman, the landlord's wife, was a cousin of Benjamin Thompson's father. (Everybody in Woburn in those days seems to have been related to everybody else.) One day, says Brooks, they happened to notice this tree standing near the road. It was a "natural" apple tree, ungrafted, and a favorite with the woodpeckers of the vicinity, which had drilled holes all over its trunk. They tried the fruit then ripe and found it delicious. Baldwin took scions from the tree and planted them. They bore the same fine fruit as the parent tree, and the apples were named for their discoverer, Loammi Baldwin.

This last fact, that the apple was named for Colonel Baldwin, is true enough; the rest appears to be mere legend, and not authentic legend at that. The true story of the Baldwin apple was long

involved in contradiction. As in the case of Homer, some seven localities contended for the honor of its birth; but a number of years ago Rev. Leander Thompson of Woburn, a conscientious historian, went thoroughly into the tangled snarl of claims and straightened it out very skilfully. Here I can only report his conclusions,¹ which were that the actual tree of whose fruit Colonel Baldwin ate and was glad stood on the farm of a Mr. Butters in Wilmington, where a monument has been erected in commemoration of the discovery of this choice native fruit of New England. The proof is complete that Colonel Baldwin never knew of the apple till twenty years after the days when he trudged along the dusty road to Cambridge with the future Count Rumford by his side.²

The later history of the Black Horse Tavern building is a chequered and rather melancholy one. The thirties of the last century were a time of real estate speculation, and the old house became a kind of pawn in the deals and trades of the speculators. It had many owners, and was plastered thick with mortgages. On a single day, April 23, 1840, it had three distinct owners. Asahel P. Buckman sold it to Deacon Nathan B. Johnson for \$37 above the mortgage claims, and a few hours later Deacon Johnson conveyed the entire estate, freed from mortgage claims, to Hervey Wilbur, who lived there for seven years and then sold it to Henry Morrison of Boston. Again the trading about began. On the day that Morrison bought it the old house again had three owners, for he immediately sold it to Charles Hubbard of Chelsea and made \$500 by the trade! Mr. Hubbard, by the way, was the father of Mrs. Moses A. Herrick, whose husband was long an eminent citizen of Winchester. Among the other owners of the house for longer or shorter times were Samuel Steele Richardson, of whom we shall hear more in a later chapter, and Charles McIntire, a member of the first board of selectmen in Winchester. For sixteen years from 1866 to 1882, it was the residence of Josiah F. Stone, the manager of a life insurance office in Boston, and an enthusiastic "amateur" farmer and gardener. While he lived in the old house its grounds were attractive with hedges, fruit trees and beds of flowers. He,

¹ His article on the origin of the Baldwin apple is to be found in the *Winchester Record*, Vol. I, pages 172 seq.

² As a matter of fact it was not Colonel Baldwin, but the surveyor, Samuel Thompson, who actually discovered the tree.

too, was in his turn a selectman of the town, and a representative in the legislature.

Meanwhile the acreage of the old Black Horse farm had been sold off, streets had been opened through it to meet the needs of the growing village, and in 1892 Preston Pond, the last owner of the old house, finding it unwanted and falling into bad repair, had it pulled down, and through its grounds opened the street we know today as Black Horse Terrace.

It is unfortunate that the house could not have been preserved, both for its intrinsic interest as a piece of old colonial architecture and for the historic memories that clustered about it. Such old buildings grow regrettably few. The tavern would have stood as a connecting link between the little farming community of Waterfield and the busy and beautiful town of today in which Winchester people could have taken an honest pride. It has gone, and the town is poorer for its disappearance.

CHAPTER VIII

WINCHESTER IN THE REVOLUTION

THE part taken in the war of the Revolution by the men who then lived in what is today Winchester territory must, of course, be extracted with some labor from the town records both of Woburn and of Medford, and from the military records preserved in those cities and in the Massachusetts archives at the State House. Converses, Richardsons, Johnsons and Belknaps were among the voters who in Woburn town meeting, as early as October 10, 1766, instructed their representative in the General Court not to consent to paying damages to officers of the crown — Lieutenant-Governor Hutchinson in particular — whose property had been injured by an anti-Stamp Act mob in Boston.¹ They were also among those who adopted in town meeting, February 1, 1773, a report which reads like a Declaration of Independence in embryo, listing a dozen causes for complaint against the acts of Parliament and the conduct of the crown's officers, and declaring finally that Parliament "had no power to bind the colonists by laws or to impose taxes upon them, without their consent either in person or through representatives."² And they took part in the meeting of December 23, 1773, which voted to build a house in which to store ammunition; and in that of January 4, 1775, which voted to pay no tax moneys to the regularly appointed treasurer of the province, Harrison Gray, Esq., but to turn them over instead to Henry Gardner, Esq., of Stow,³ who had been chosen by the Provincial Congress that met at Salem in 1774 to act as treasurer of the already rebellious colony of Massachusetts.⁴

Symmeses and Brookses were present at the Medford town meeting of December 31, 1772, which voted to stand firmly behind the citizens of Boston "in whatever measures shall be thought

¹ Woburn Records, Vol. IX, page 10.

² Woburn Records, Vol. IX, pages 188-191.

³ A descendant of Richard Gardner, see page 50.

⁴ Woburn Records, Vol. IX, pages 252, 262.

expedient to be adopted for the preservation of our liberties, civil and religious." They helped to pass the vote that "the British Parliament has no constitutional authority to tax these Colonies without their consent," and that of November 14, 1774, "that we will not use East India Tea till the Acts be repealed."¹

These were official expressions of patriotic determination; we can only picture in our imagination the scenes in the bar or the meeting hall of the Black Horse Tavern, where, throughout these troublous years, the farmers of this neighborhood met, evening after evening, to discuss the Stamp Act, the tax on tea, the Boston Port Bill, and all the other unpopular acts of Parliament, and to exchange opinions on what the colonists should do in defence of their rights. No records were ever kept of those fireside conferences of local patriots which were taking place in taverns or private houses all over Massachusetts; but it was at them that resolutions were taken and fires of patriotism kindled, which later swept through the town meetings and caused the organization of bodies of "minutemen" prepared for instant military service if all else failed.

The fateful morning of April 19, 1775 found the citizens of both Woburn and Medford ready. Medford was on the road of Paul Revere, and had early warning of the advance of the British troops on Lexington. Its company of minutemen was assembled and despatched before light. At least two Winchester men were among them — Lieutenant Caleb Brooks who was born in the old house at Symmes Corner, known to a later generation as the Le Bosquet house, and John Symmes.

There were as yet no minutemen in Woburn. Only two days before the town had voted to raise such a company; it was almost the last town in Middlesex County to do so. An interesting letter is still in existence² written by Major Josiah Johnson in 1775, which is largely a defence of the town for its delay.³ Quite evidently the influential men of Woburn thought minutemen unnecessary, having three excellent militia companies and a newly enlisted company of artillery, "well equipped and exercising daily without

¹ Brooks History of Medford, page 160.

² Printed in the *Woburn Journal* of May 28, 1897.

³ Major Johnson lived for a number of years in Winchester on Ridge Street; later he removed to Woburn Center.

expense to the town." And quite as clearly there was a party in Woburn who were ready to charge Major Johnson and others with lukewarmness to the patriot cause because no company of minutemen had been formed.¹

The confidence felt by the town fathers in their militia companies seems to have been justified. When the news of the British advance on Lexington and Concord reached Woburn, it was just before dawn. The word passed quickly through the town. Messengers carried it up Lexington Street to the village square, up the country road from the Four Corners to "the Precinct," which is now Burlington, and down Plain Street (Cambridge Street) to South Woburn which is today Winchester. Our Winchester men were nearly equally divided between the first and second militia companies. Main Street was the dividing line; those living to the west of it were in the first company, those living to the east of it in the second. Yet it is a curious fact that the captain of the West Company, Samuel Belknap, lived to the east of the road and the captain of the East Company, Jonathan Fox (and later Jesse Wyman), lived to the west of it.

But the men did not delay to assemble and march by companies to Lexington. Each man, as he got the word, seized his musket and ammunition and made his way, at his best speed, across the fields or down the old road (now Russell Street) from the Four Corners to the scene of the fighting.

Only a few Woburn men arrived at Lexington in time to take part in the actual fighting there. But the first man to fall by a British bullet was Asahel Porter who lived in Woburn. His grandson, Samuel Porter, was long a resident of Winchester. He lived on Cross Street and died there, almost one hundred years old. As the men straggled into Lexington they were formed into line by the captains of their respective companies — Belknap, Fox and Walker — and hurried along the road to Concord in pursuit of the British forces. They came up with the redcoats as they began to withdraw after the fight at Concord Bridge, and taking cover behind stone walls and trees on either side of the road were among the most active in this Indianlike warfare during the retreat of the British soldiers all fifteen miles to Charlestown. Nor did they

¹ Major Johnson's letter.

desist from the chase until the redcoats, spent and exhausted, tumbled into their boats at the Charlestown ferry.

Among the folk tales that had their origin in the stirring events of that nineteenth of April is one which, whether or not authentic in all details, must have had a substantial foundation in fact. It has to do with the gray-headed Yankee horseman mounted on a powerful white steed, who harassed the British during their retreat from Concord, and who, though he killed or wounded a number of redcoats, himself bore a charmed life among the bullets that showered about him. This remarkable "white horseman" was a Winchester man, Hezekiah Wyman, whose home was on Cambridge Street on the spot where his grandson Marshall Wyman lived within the memory of a few still living.

Hezekiah was fifty-five on the morning of the Lexington alarm. He was a son of that Captain Seth Wyman whom we have seen winning fame in Lovewell's fight with the Indians, and consequently he was a great-grandson of Major William Johnson. He had returned, about the middle of the century, from old Woburn, to live in the neighborhood where his Johnson ancestors had lived. On the morning of the battle he had, so the story goes, early news of the British advance on Lexington. In spite of his age he determined to bear his part, and though his wife remonstrated with him, he mounted his strong white mare and, musket in hand, set off at a gallop for Lexington. He was too late for the fighting at the Common, as the other Woburn men were, but riding his horse up the Concord road he came face to face with the returning British soldiers. He rode at them furiously, discharging his piece, and a redcoat fell. Spurring his mare over the stonewall into the field he reloaded and returned to the attack. Again and again he rode at the enemy, always getting his man, but always escaping unhurt himself. "His tall, gaunt form, his white locks floating in the breeze, and the color of his horse distinguished him from the other Americans; the British called him 'Death on the Pale Horse.' . . . Once a bayonet charge drove him off, . . . but ere long he was returning to the charge and this time killed an officer. His powerful white horse, careering at full speed over the hills, with the dauntless old man on his back, was continually to be seen, and the British learned

to dread his reappearance in their front and the report of his trusty musket."¹

Hezekiah Wyman is said to have joined the "old men of Menotomy" who laid an ambush for the ammunition and supply wagons that were following Lord Percy's troops, who came out from Boston to succor the flying British and convoy them back to Charlestown. These men, all beyond the age of active service, placed themselves behind a stonewall and, firing upon the supply train as it passed, killed some of the party of soldiers that accompanied it and dispersed the rest, all of whom, twelve in number, were later captured. There is a monument in memory of this exploit in front of the First Parish Church in Arlington. After participating in this affair Hezekiah, we are told, resumed his hectoring of the retreating British and followed them like an avenging spirit all the way to Charlestown.

The tale of his strange adventures may owe something to the embroidery of three generations of story-tellers, but observe this: in his will, made four years later, he leaves as an object of special value "my white mare" to one of his sons.²

There is another venerable tradition that on this same historic morning a company of British cavalry rode into what is now Winchester center, coming over the county road from Medford. These soldiers are said to have halted at Abel Richardson's (the old Converse house), tied their horses to the ancient elm that overhung the house, and in some way to have injured the tree so that it became split and had to be bound together thereafter.³ The incident exists only in the realm of legend, but it is not incredible. Remember that the Massachusetts Committee of Safety, meeting at West Cambridge (Arlington) on April 18, adjourned to meet next day at the Black Horse Tavern in South Woburn. It is quite possible that the British may have learned of that fact, and dispatched a patrol of cavalry to break up the meeting and arrest the committeemen if they put in an appearance. It is harder to believe that anything less than a cannon ball could have split apart a tree then thirty

¹ From an article in the *Boston Pearl*, "before 1840," the earliest known appearance of the story of the white horseman in print. The article, found in an old scrapbook, was reprinted in the *Woburn Journal* of July 12, 1887.

² The will is preserved in the Middlesex County records.

³ Article by Oliver R. Clark in the *Winchester Record*, Vol. I, page 56.

feet in circumference; that part of the legend can safely be dismissed as invented.

It is not easy to say exactly how many men from our community took part in the famous battle that ushered in the Revolutionary War. Accurate records of this early volunteer service have not been preserved. Of the two hundred and fifty men belonging to the three Woburn companies one hundred and eighty were present during the fighting,¹ and it is probable that at least twenty were from our part of the old town. Among those who are positively known to have been in arms either at Lexington and Concord or at Bunker Hill (and in some cases at both battles) are many whose names already have a familiar sound; Captain Samuel Belknap, John Symmes, Robert Converse, Daniel Reed, Abel Richardson, Joseph Brown, Zachariah Brooks, Paul Wyman, Francis Johnson, Jeduthan Richardson, Gideon Richardson, Samuel Symmes, Jesse Richardson, Jonathan Locke and Zechariah Symmes.²

To these may be added two natives of our community who were not at the time living here: John Brooks, captain of the Reading minutemen, and Lieutenant Caleb Brooks, of Captain Isaac Hull's company of Medford militia. These two men were half-brothers and both were born in the old Brooks house at Symmes Corner. They both — together with Captain Belknap and a number of private soldiers from Winchester homes — saw service also under General Washington in the siege of Boston, which continued from June 1775 until General Howe evacuated the city on March 17, 1776.

During this first year of the Revolution military service was voluntary, and since their own homes were threatened by the presence of the British army in Boston, Massachusetts men were ready and eager to offer themselves. With the formation of the Continental Army, however, and the movement of military operations out of New England to the more distant regions of New York, New Jersey and the South, we hear no more of volunteering. Its place was taken by a draft, to which all members of the militia companies were subject. For example, on July 11, 1776, every twenty-fifth

¹ Major Johnson's letter.

² See the Records of Soldiers and Sailors in the Revolution (17 vols.), published by the Commonwealth, and W. R. Cutter's MS. records of Woburn soldiers, preserved in the Woburn Public Library.

man in the Woburn companies was drafted for active service with the army in New York and New Jersey, and on September 12, 1776 every fifth man in the same companies was drafted to march to Ticonderoga where preparations were making for an expedition against Canada. In the same way twenty-nine men were drafted in 1777 to join the New England troops that formed a part of General Gates's army facing Burgoyne's invasion of northern New York.

On two occasions, once in 1777 and once a year later, men were drafted for service in Rhode Island, where the British still held the town of Newport, from which an American army under General Sullivan, aided in 1778 by a French fleet, tried unsuccessfully to drive them. And again and again during these years detachments from the Woburn militia (including several Winchester men) were drafted to "guard prisoners" from Burgoyne's defeated army, held captive at Cambridge or at Bunker Hill. Finally there were occasional drafts to fill up the quota of Massachusetts men in the Continental Army. As the war prolonged itself, the towns took to hiring men by means of bounties to fill up the quotas required of them, and it became more and more common for drafted men, who could afford it, to hire substitutes to take their places. Among the Wyman manuscripts preserved at Woburn are scores of receipts for money paid out "for hiring men into the war." In the month of June 1778, Captain Belknap received from the town treasurer £983 and some odd shillings, with which to hire fighting men. During July 1779 Bartholomew Richardson received almost £3,000 to be spent for the same purpose. The reason for so great an increase in the amount paid in 1779 must be sought in the progressive loss in value which the Continental currency underwent. In 1777 the town of Woburn was offering bounties of from £6 to £12 for men who enlisted for three or five months service. In 1778 it had to pay a bounty of £81 5s for men to join the army in New York on an eight months enlistment. By 1780 it was necessary to pay no less than £1,200 for a similar service. Paper money was worth only two or three cents on a dollar; within another year or two its value had disappeared altogether. "Not worth a Continental" was the popular phrase to express absolute worthlessness.

It is related of John Symmes (later Captain John) that when

he returned home in 1780, "ragged and emaciated" after three years service in the Continental Army, he was able, with his pay, to buy a yoke of oxen. Tempted by the rise in the nominal value of the oxen as the money depreciated, he sold the animals. But he made the mistake of keeping the money by him for a time; when he was ready to spend it, all it would buy was a sack of Indian meal!¹

As I have said, the practice of hiring substitutes for distant service became general; Yankee thrift of course dictated caution with regard to the sum to be paid. We read that Josiah Johnson, Jr., drafted for the army facing Burgoyne in 1777, aroused great indignation among his neighbors by paying £30 for his substitute, which it seems was about double the going price at that time.²

It was customary in the later years of the war for the citizens to divide themselves, or be divided by the assessors, into as many "classes" as there were men in the quota that the town was required to furnish to the Continental Army. The members of each class were then assessed, in accordance with their ability to pay, a sufficient sum to hire a soldier to represent them. Occasionally the man hired would be himself a member of the "class"; more often he would be one whose ratable property was not large enough to include him in any class.³

It follows therefore that although well-known citizens, members of old established families, were commonly to be found in the ranks while the fighting was on Massachusetts soil the later quotas (except for such peaceful service as guarding prisoners) were chiefly made up of later comers, men whose names are no longer familiar, and who were sufficiently in need of money to be willing to take a little risk to earn it.

In all about forty men connected with our Winchester community saw more or less service in the Revolutionary armies. This includes several who did not live in the little village during the war but who were subsequent residents for many years — like Captain John Le Bosquet, Colonel Bill Russell and Job Miller, for example. The names, so far as they can be identified, are printed in Appendix A.

¹ Symmes Memorial, page 55. His title was not won in the Revolution but as a captain of militia.

² Cutter's MSS. Revolutionary Records in Woburn Library.

³ Sewall's History of Woburn, page 368.

Besides furnishing men for the fighting forces, the towns were required to supply food and clothing in great quantity for the army. We are so used to the idea that the national government shall undertake the task of feeding and clothing its soldiers that it seems a little strange to read of such responsibilities being thrown on the individual towns. But during the Revolution there was no national government worthy of the name; and the Continental Congress, which represented what there was, had no financial resources and no administrative system equal to the emergency. So each of the thirteen colonies — or states as they now were — had the duty of finding clothes and food for its own men in arms, and the only way they could get what was needed was to collect it in the form of goods or money from the several towns.

Accordingly we read of "beef-taxes" being levied on the citizens of Woburn (and so of course on those who lived in what is now Winchester), wherewith to raise money for the purchase of beef cattle. On one occasion, in 1780, the town had to find no less than 24,078 pounds of beef — which it did, no doubt, by purchasing the cattle of its own citizens. Let us hope there was no profiteering in the transaction.

In 1778 the towns were required by law to provide as many shirts, shoes and stockings as would clothe one-seventh part of all their male inhabitants. And in 1781 the Legislature, resolving to "collect clothes for the Commonwealth's quota in the Continental Army," levied on Woburn for forty-two shirts, as many pairs of shoes and stockings, and twenty-one blankets. There still exist in the Wyman collection of manuscripts at Woburn a great number of orders on the Town Treasurer in payment for articles of this sort sold to the town. As for example, "Please to pay Zachariah Richardson twenty pounds for hose he delivered to the Selectmen."¹ "Please to pay Paul Wyman seven pounds in part for . . . shirts, shoes, stockings and blankets he supplied the State in 1781."² Which, with more of the same sort, indicate that residents of our community did their share in providing for the needs of the never-too-well-equipped Continentals.

The most distinguished native of Winchester territory to serve

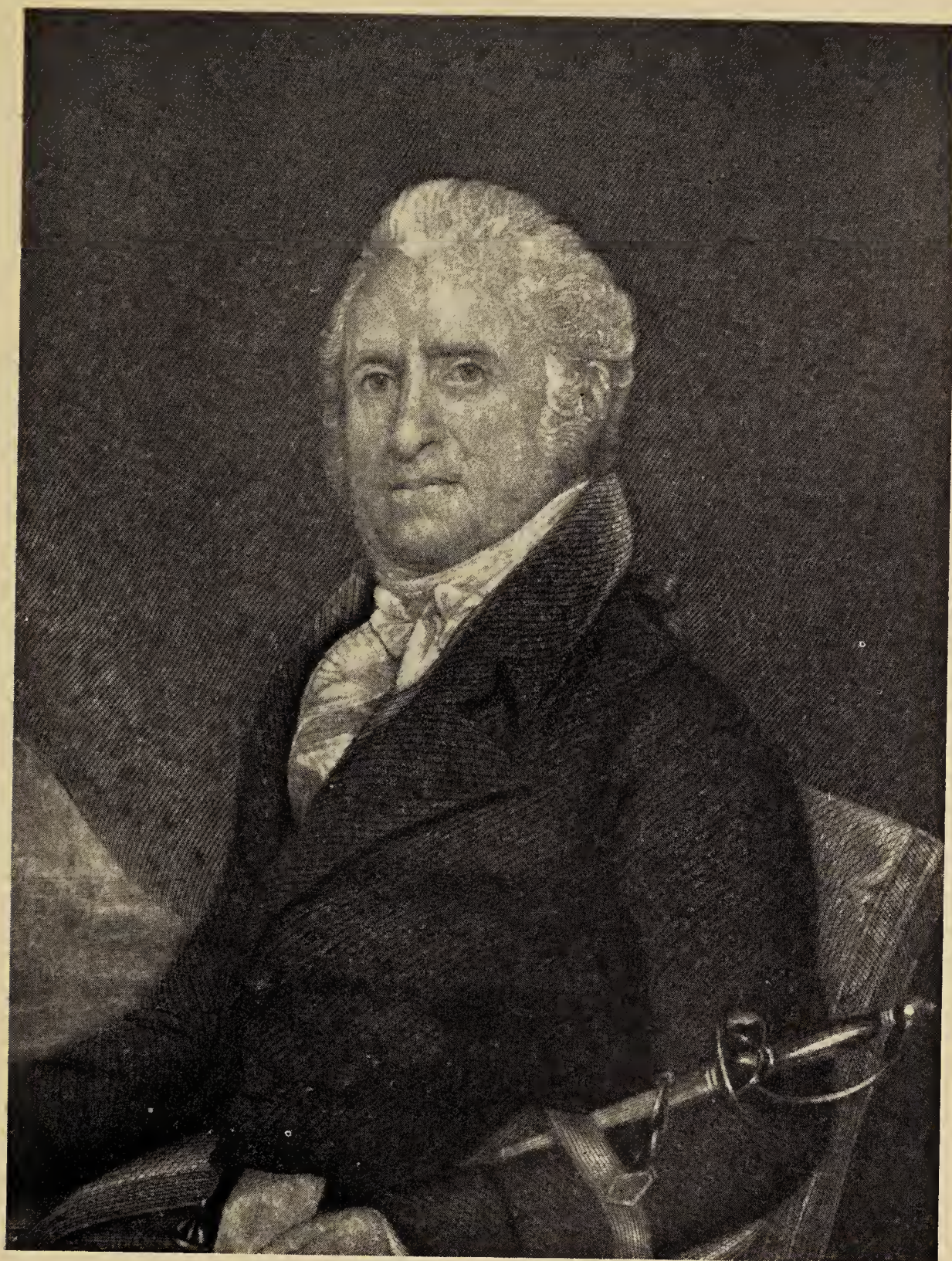
¹ Of date February 11, 1780, Wyman MSS.

² Wyman MSS.

in the Revolution, perhaps the most distinguished of all time, was Colonel John Brooks, who afterward became major general of the State Militia and Governor of Massachusetts from 1816 to 1823. John Brooks was born in the house built by his grandfather Ebenezer at Symmes Corner in 1715, as was his half-brother Caleb, who likewise made a name for himself on Revolutionary battlefields and gained the rank of captain there. John displayed unusual abilities from boyhood as well as a taste for military life, for he organized his playmates into a little company and drilled them with the strictness and severity of a veteran sergeant. His mother, ambitious that he should make use of his talents, got Dr. Tufts, the physician at Medford, to take the boy under his care at fourteen and educate him in the practice of medicine. In 1773, his seven years of apprenticeship over, he became the physician at Reading. His professional duties were however interrupted by the outbreak of the Revolution. Brooks, young as he was, had been elected captain of the Reading minutemen. He served with his company at Concord and Bunker Hill, and made so good an impression on his superiors that he was given a commission in the Continental Army.

He served throughout the war, rising to the command of a regiment. He bore an honorable part at the battles of Long Island and White Plains, and the gallantry of himself and his regiment — the Eighth Massachusetts — at Saratoga was in no small degree responsible for Burgoyne's defeat there. Colonel Brooks was with Washington at Valley Forge, and won the confidence and affection of the commander-in-chief, who assigned him to assist Baron Steuben as inspector general in restoring and improving the discipline of the army. At Newburgh in 1783 he still further endeared himself to General Washington by helping to frustrate the conspiracy among certain officers to overthrow the Continental Congress and set up a kind of military dictatorship.

After the war he returned to Medford and to the practice of his profession. But he was soon and often thrown into public life. President Washington appointed him United States marshal of Massachusetts; President Adams made him a major general in the United States army when a war with France seemed not unlikely in 1798. He was sent to the legislature several times; was adjutant general of the State during the War of 1812 — though he,



GOVERNOR JOHN BROOKS

like other Federalists, opposed it — and ended his career with seven successive elections to the governorship.

The old house in which Governor Brooks was born was in later years associated with the name of another Revolutionary veteran, Captain John Le Bosquet, who married Mary Brooks — niece of the



THE BROOKS-LE BOSQUET HOUSE

governor—to whom the ownership of the house had descended. The house, which stood near the present corner of Main Street and Everell Road, was familiar to Winchester folk as the Le Bosquet house until it was torn down some fifty years ago. Captain Le Bosquet — his title was not a military one but gained on the high seas, where he long commanded a merchant square rigger — joined the Revolutionary army at Cambridge, during the siege of Boston in 1775, when he was only fourteen. He was at first a fifer, but he soon discarded his instrument for a musket and served an enlistment of three years, which led him to Ticonderoga, Saratoga and Valley Forge.

He took to the sea after his discharge and went as cabin boy on a sailing vessel. His ship was captured by the British and taken as a prize into Halifax. Lying in the harbor, the American prisoners broke out of the hold while the captain of the prize crew was alone on deck, his men having been sent up the river to refill the water butts. It was no trick to subdue the officer and stow him away safely below. The Americans, among whom of course was young Le Bosquet, made their escape in a small boat and headed for Boston. But coming upon a larger craft, a sloop or "market-boat," outside the harbor, they boarded it, obliged the skipper to make an exchange of boats, and sailed away southward; they were lucky enough to reach Boston without mishap. Captain Le Bosquet followed the sea for many years, trading principally in the West Indies or to France. He witnessed the bloodshed of the French Revolution and made his own comment on what he saw by hanging a picture of Robespierre in his ship's cabin and drawing a brushful of red paint across its throat. During the War of 1812 he was again captured by a British man-of-war and kept in confinement for more than a year. The last twenty years of his life he passed continuously in Winchester, and he was one of the most familiar figures on the streets of the little village, walking with a cane and limping somewhat, the result of a slight paralytic shock. He died in 1844, and the house and farm, after his wife's death a few years later, became Symmes property once more. It was bought by Marshall Symmes; the house remained standing until the widening of Main Street in 1881 rendered its removal desirable.¹

Among the Winchester volunteers who saw Revolutionary service was Philemon Wright, who in later life was the first settler of what is today Ottawa, the capital city of Canada. Philemon's father, Thomas Wright, lived in a house long since disappeared, at the corner of High and Ridge streets, which was, indeed, locally known as Wright's Corner. After the Revolution was over and his father had died, Philemon Wright continued to live in the old house for some years. The grave of his little daughter Nabby, dead in 1792, was long to be seen near by. Philemon became interested in fur trading and went often to visit Canada to purchase furs. He saw and coveted the rich land along the Ottawa River,

¹ Article by Luther R. Symmes, Winchester Press, Vol. II, No. 7.

which was then in the heart of the wilderness. He procured a large grant from the Canadian government, and in 1800 sold his farm at Wright's Corner and with his brother and two neighbors named Merrifield travelled north by sleigh to establish himself on his new property. Josiah Locke purchased the Wright farm and a few years later built the large house with brick ends which still stands on High Street.

Philemon Wright cleared his land on the Ottawa, built a mill to grind his grain (for until he did so he and all the settlers along the Ottawa had to carry their grain all the way to Montreal to be ground) and became a man of consequence. He made something of a fortune in timber and was before his death a member of the Parliament of Quebec. The city of Ottawa stands today as part of his original grant, though it was a part he had disposed of long before.¹

Enough has hardly been made of the difficulties of life under which the people of our own town labored, along with those of every other state and town in the country, during the closing years of the Revolution and for ten years thereafter. These difficulties were the result of the enormous financial cost of the war (for a nation relatively so poor) and the entire collapse of the existing monetary system. Taxes were exorbitant when the means of the people at large are considered. In the year 1780 no less than eight different taxes were assessed on the people of Woburn, including of course the residents of this part of the old town, and these in addition to the regular town tax, which was formerly the chief tax to be collected. They all amounted to more than \$40,000 in "lawful money" or coin and they were divided among not many more than three hundred taxpayers, almost all of them farmers, who saw little enough money at any time. And so small was the value of the paper currency that the taxes for this year, 1780, expressed in paper, amounted to no less than a million and a quarter dollars!

Under these conditions prices rose to such alarming heights that an attempt was made to "peg" them by legal action, and in this town it was enacted that these prices should prevail:

¹ See article in *Winchester Star*, May 25, 1899.

“West India Flip, 12 shillings a mug
New England rum, 10 shillings a mug
A common dinner, 15 shillings
Oats, 45 shillings a bushel
Day labor 36 shillings a day
Shoeing a horse all round £3, 12s.
A team carrying a ton weight 18 shillings a mile
Carpenters or masons, 56 shillings a day
Men’s shoes, 18 dollars a pair
Women’s best leather shoes, 84 shillings
For making a pair of shoes, 48 shillings”

And so on. Anyone who violated these regulations by charging more than was allowed, should be “accounted an enemy of his country, have his name published in the newspapers of Boston, and be cut off from all intercourse and dealings with other inhabitants of the town.” As usually happens, these man-made resolutions proved impotent in the face of economic forces. Prices continued to rise, and there is no record that anyone was ever punished in the manner prescribed above. At the end of the war paper money was worth so little that the town of Woburn directed its treasurer to “dispose” of all the bills in the treasury, provided he could get a dollar in coin for as little as a hundred and fifty dollars in paper.

Financial worries bore so heavily on everybody that there was a good deal of quiet sympathy with those farmers in the western part of the State who lost all patience, and attributing their distress to the government, flamed out into the insurrection called Shays’s Rebellion in 1786. The town of Woburn actually voted “not to give any aid or assistance” to the State in recruiting men to put down the insurrection,” and “not to make any pay or allowance to any persons that hired or went of their own accord” on such service.¹

But in spite of difficulties and hardships the sturdy people of our neighborhood came successfully out of them. By prudence and economy in public and private affairs, by working a little harder and pulling the belt in a little tighter, they won through until the formation of a solid government under the Constitution of 1788

¹ Woburn Records, Vol. XI, page 67; Vol. XI, page 154.

and the establishment of a sound and stable currency, which made industry and enterprise again profitable, encouraged thrift and savings, and gave a certain and dependable value to the wages of labor and the products of the soil or the workshop.

Two interesting evidences of the temper of the times are supplied by the records of action taken in the town meetings of Woburn. One was the adoption of instructions to Captain Samuel Belknap — whom we have often met in this narrative and who was the town's representative in the General Court in 1783. He was instructed (with courteous reference to his well-known "rectitude of conduct, and his firmness against persuasion through flattery, intimidation by menace, or corruption by sinister views or personal emoluments") never to consent to the resettlement in Massachusetts of any who had been hostile to the Revolution, "whether known as Tories, Conspirators or Refugees." These men were not to be admitted again to the country, or compensated for the property they had abandoned when the war began.¹ The instructions (drafted perhaps by Colonel Loammi Baldwin) are rhetorical, but full of fire. They leave us in no doubt concerning the sentiments of the patriot forefathers toward the Tories.

The other episode occurred during the discussion in town meeting of the new constitution for the State of Massachusetts, to replace that under which the colony had been governed. The meeting accepted the constitution in great part, but voted that there should be no sort of property qualification for the suffrage, and — mark this — that all ordained ministers of the gospel and all attorneys at law should be excluded from the State legislature!² This was the expression of the dislike of a stubborn farming population for being governed by the cleverness of professional men. Ministers have not, as a matter of fact, often offered themselves as candidates for political office; but how different would be the composition of our twentieth century legislatures if the prejudices of the Woburn and Winchester farmers had prevailed, and the legal profession been barred — for better or worse — from seats therein!

¹ Town Records, Vol. X, page 294.

² Woburn Records, Vol. X, page 24.

CHAPTER IX

WINCHESTER IN 1798. THE MIDDLESEX CANAL

IN 1798, on the occasion of the imposition of a direct tax on the people of the states by the United States government, Massachusetts required each of its towns to survey its territory and prepare a map thereof, and to make a record of all the real estate then subject to assessment. The record of Woburn real estate, still preserved among the Wyman collection of manuscripts, makes it possible to get a very correct idea of what the settlement that was to become Winchester looked like at the end of the eighteenth century.

There were, it appears, about thirty-five houses within the boundaries of Winchester as we know it, which means a population of not much above two hundred. The families who occupied them were, with but two or three exceptions, descendants of the men who had settled Woburn one hundred and fifty years ago; most of them had lived for four, five or even six generations on the very land on which their houses stood. There were seven Richardson houses, five Symmes houses, three Gardner houses, three Wymans, one or possibly two Carters, two Lockes, one Converse and two Johnsons.¹

Among these families were three comparatively recent comers concerning whom a few words may be said. About the middle of the century, Hezekiah Wyman, a distant cousin of the Wymans we have seen settled on the east side of Main Street, came from old Woburn to live on Plain or Cambridge Street on the West Side. We have already made his acquaintance; he was the famous "white horseman" whose exploits on the day of Lexington and Concord

¹ The list includes Ebenezer Brooks, Capt. Joseph Brown, Simon or Samuel Carter, "The Dean house," Henry, Edward and John Gardner, Benjamin Converse, Simeon Gould, W. C. Hunt, Frederick and Francis Johnson, Darius Ingraham, Thomas Hutchinson, Jonathan and Josiah Locke, Edmund Parker, Jacob Pierce, Daniel Reed, Col. Bill Russell, Jonathan, Joseph, Caleb, Jeduthan, Abel, Zechariah and Rebecca (widow of Benjamin) Richardson, Caleb Swan, John, Josiah, William, Samuel and Zechariah Symmes, Samuel Thompson, Daniel, Paul and Nathaniel Wyman.

have been related. His house was in the old Johnson neighborhood, not far from the corner of Cambridge and Wildwood streets, but on the opposite side of the way. He bought and owned a great part of the level land on which so much of the West Side is now built. That land was often called Wyman Plains in after years. After Hezekiah's death it was owned by his son Daniel, and by his grandsons, Marshall, William and George, influential citizens all, whose family name has been perpetuated by a succession of schoolhouses



THE THADDEUS PARKER HOUSE

on the West Side, the most recent of which stands today on Church Street, below Fletcher Street.

Another resident of Winchester territory who had come so lately that his house was described in the 1798 list as "almost new" was Edmund Parker. His family were numerous along Cambridge Street in the direction of the Four Corners, "the Parker neighborhood" it was called. But Edmund was the first of the name to cross what was later to be the Winchester line. His house stood on the southeasterly corner of Pond and Cambridge streets, and was long a familiar landmark in that part of the town. His elder son

Edmund later built the house which still stands on the other corner of Pond Street. His younger son Thaddeus, who followed his father's trade of wheelwright, lived in the old house till his death in 1889 at the age of 95 — "the oldest man in Winchester," it was said. Not many years later the house caught fire and burned to the ground. The cellar hole is still to be seen on the high bank beside the road.

The third family of which I speak was that of the Swans, who lived in Richardson's Row, near the present corner of Nelson Street. They were not related to that other family of Swans who lived on the farm now occupied by the Winchester Country Club and one of whose members bought the Edward Gardner house on Cambridge Street, already referred to as probably the oldest house now standing in our town. Caleb Swan was from Charlestown. His father's house was one of those burned during the British bombardment of Bunker Hill. His mother was Joanna Richardson of the old Winchester family of that name, and it was in consequence of his inheritance of a large amount of land here that Caleb Swan moved to Richardson's Row. This Swan family was remarkable for its taste for the profession of medicine. One of Caleb's brothers was a physician; his nephew, Dr. Daniel Swan, was for forty years the beloved physician of Medford. Caleb, his son, was the Dr. Caleb Swan long settled in Easton, Massachusetts, and all four of Dr. Caleb's sons were physicians likewise. The family long ago disappeared from Winchester.

It is interesting in looking over the real estate record of 1798 to see how many houses are set down as having "shoe-making shops" connected with them. For a good many years, beginning about 1770 and lasting until 1840 or even later, the making of shoes was a very thriving industry in South Woburn, as the Winchester end of the town now began to be called. There was, of course, no factory in the modern sense of the word. Shoemaking machinery was yet to be invented. The leather was cut, the soles shaped, the leather fitted to the last, and the soles and uppers pegged or stitched together by hand. The work was necessarily slow, and could give employment to a considerable number of persons. Woburn was already known as a "leather town"; tanning and currying leather was carried on there back in the eighteenth

century, and it is not surprising that the business of turning the leather into shoes flourished in the same neighborhood. Woburn, South Woburn (Winchester), and Stoneham were all full of the little domestic shops. So, too, were Lynn, Reading, Haverhill, Amesbury and other Massachusetts towns. Women as well as men found employment; they did much of the stitching and binding at home. Lucy Larcom, the New England poetess, has painted in words a little picture of such a worker, Hannah, whom she sees "at the window, binding shoes."

The shoe shops here in Winchester were usually small buildings, perhaps twelve feet square, standing beside, or in the rear of, the owner's house. One who learned his trade in one of them has described them for us. "The shoemaker had a low seat made of plank, on one end of which he sat with his tools at his right hand. There were a lapstone and hammer to pound the soles hard and smooth, a knife, an awl, a long stick to polish the bottoms by friction, a shoulder-stick to smooth the heels and the sides of the soles, paste, gum, flax thread, and wooden pegs to hold the shoes together. A day's work was from morning until ten at night. From four to eight pairs could be made in a day; the usual wage was a dollar a day. At night a single tin or glass lamp, filled with whale oil, hung from overhead and swayed in front of the workmen."¹

Sometimes the owner worked alone; more often he employed two or three young men who worked with him. Sometimes the shoemakers supplied their own materials and took the finished shoes into Boston to sell to the wholesale dealers; sometimes they worked on contract for stores that dealt in especially fine custom-made shoes. Sometimes the Winchester shoemakers did nothing else; sometimes they worked a farm as well and worked at their trade at odd times. Altogether the shoe industry must have brought quite a little money into the village; it was indeed the chief source of ready money for our Winchester folk a century and more ago.

Mr. Richardson, from whose recollections I have quoted, has left us a surprising list of the little shoe shops that were in operation in what is now Winchester, one hundred years ago. He names thirty-five, and when it is remembered that there were less than

¹ N. A. Richardson's Scrapbook. Article printed in the *Winchester Star*.

seventy houses in the village then, it will be seen to what an extent the community depended on the trade of St. Crispin. Richardson's Row was lined with shops; a dozen members of this family are mentioned as having been shoemakers at one time or another during this period. Among them were Deacon Calvin, Deacon Nathan, and Deacon Luther Richardson. Twin brothers, Caleb and Joshua Richardson, sons of Joseph, who built the gristmill on the Horn Pond Brook where the Cutter mill later stood, made shoes on Main Street, opposite Swanton Street in the old house, occupied until late years by Mr. George Stratton. Joshua was killed — in 1807 — by the collapse of a house frame on which he was working. The house was being built by Major Clapp of Woburn. Four men died as a result of the falling of the frame, and many others were badly hurt. The accident made a great stir in and around Woburn; it was many years before people ceased to talk of it.

Job Miller, a Revolutionary veteran, and his son-in-law John Eaton had a shop near Prince Avenue. Paul Wyman, the storekeeper of the town, had one; so did Samuel B. White (later Colonel White), Joseph and Horatio Symmes and many more. The old Sharon house, which still stands near Black Horse Terrace on Main Street, was originally Calvin Richardson, Jr.'s shoe shop, before it was built over into a dwelling house. On the west side of the town Edmund Parker had a good-sized shop on Cambridge Street opposite Pond Street where an old blacksmith shop now stands. Colonel Bill Russell, another Revolutionary veteran, who lived in the house — really much older than it appears — at the corner of Calumet Road and Cambridge Street, eked out his farm income by making shoes, and so did several members of the Wyman family farther up the road. But enough of this, lest our list grow more tiresome than Homer's catalogue of ships!

One building which did not appear on the tax list of 1798 deserves mention nevertheless. It was the schoolhouse on Richardson's Row, near Harvard Street, the first schoolhouse ever to be built on Winchester soil. It was erected in 1794 at a cost of £28 17s. 6d., the town of Woburn having awakened to its responsibilities and appropriated money to build schoolhouses in nine separate districts of the town. Winchester, as we know it, fell into two of these districts. The Richardson's Row school, which



THE SYMMES HOUSE AT SYMMES CORNER

drew scholars from East Woburn as well, was placed as stated; the West Side school, completed at the same time, was located on Cambridge Street in what is still a part of Woburn; it accumulated pupils from the Four Corners in Woburn to the Charlestown line at Church Street.

These schoolhouses were, of course, primitive academies of learning. What they were like we may learn from the recollections of Rev. Leander Thompson, the Woburn antiquarian, who learned his ABCs in a similar school in North Woburn. "The school," he says, "was twenty feet square and eight feet high. On one side there was a small porch, and two small windows were on each of the four sides. The house was unpainted, dirty, dingy. Close by the door, on the right, stood the teacher's high desk. No maps, no pictures, no blackboards. No globe and no bell were on the teacher's desk; instead a very significant ruler and a well-remembered rod.

"In the center of the room stood a large shaky 'box' stove, generally kept stuffed with wood. Often it was red hot; the stove pipe which went straight up and out through the roof was then quite musical. Immediately round the stove and only a few feet from it, on three sides, was a very narrow plank seat for the youngest scholars. The seat had a high perpendicular back . . . and nothing in front on which to rest hand or head. Sometimes the poor little sufferers, exposed to the suffocating heat, rolled from their seats to the floor, to the great amusement of the more wakeful scholars.

"Just above and closely connected with this 'little seat' was another (three sided) row of seats with a plank desk, if so it could be called, for the middling scholars. These seats had no backs. . . . Behind them and higher still were the seats of the oldest pupils — often in winter, young men from eighteen to twenty-one years of age — with its continuous desk against the wall of the house. The occupants usually sat facing the wall, their backs turned to the rest of the school. Their benches had no backs unless, for relief or mischief, a scholar turned about, placing his back against the desk and resting his feet on the 'middlers' seat in provoking proximity to their persons. . . . None of these plank seats were over seven and one-half inches wide."¹

¹ Rev. Leander Thompson, *History of Woburn Schools in Town Reports for 1876*.

In these queer little buildings, typical "district" schools of the day, the children learned their reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic, with a modicum of geography thrown in. If they desired to pursue their education further they had to travel to the grammar school at Woburn center, which some — but not many — of them did. The school on Richardson's Row served until 1818, when, proving to have been none too well built, it was sold and another building erected farther up the street on land now included in the Leonard Playground. The old building, moved farther north, became Zachariah Richardson's shoemaking shop. In 1831 the school was again moved. This time with three yoke of oxen to pull it down Richardson's Row to a site near the present corner of Ridgeway. There it stood and dispensed learning, such as it was, until the building, in 1843, of a larger and finer school for "district No. 5" at the corner of Church and Dix streets, where in later years Dr. March and then Dr. Mead had their houses.

In 1831 the West Side school also went on its travels and was moved down into Winchester territory on Cambridge Street, a little way above Pond. There it stood until Winchester became a separate town in 1850. Then it was found to be no longer conveniently located for the scholars who were to attend it. It was sold and turned into a dwelling house, which still stands beside the road. The school that replaced it was finally located on the southerly side of Church Street, near the corner of Cambridge. It was the first of a succession of "Wyman" Schools.

There was no schoolhouse in the Medford corner of the town around Symmes Corner until after 1830, when a small building, the ancestor, shall we say, of the several "Mystic" Schools that have existed in this part of the town, was built on the slope of land above Main Street where Edgehill Road now runs. Miss Pamela Symmes was the first teacher; for several years before that she had kept a little school in the ell of the house of her father, Deacon John Symmes, which still stands at the corner between Grove and Main streets. Before she opened her little school the children of the neighborhood, unless they could manage to gain admission to the Richardson's Row school, which was, of course, in Woburn, had to trudge the long two miles to Medford center in order to achieve the rudiments of an education.

The year of 1798 was a momentous one for our town, for it was then that it was invaded by a small army of men bearing picks and shovels, and a numerous fleet of tip carts. The Middlesex Canal was in process of construction. This canal was one of those ambitious commercial projects that sprang up in response to the improved financial conditions and the spirit of national expansion that followed the adoption of the Constitution. James Sullivan, son of the distinguished Revolutionary soldier General John Sullivan, himself judge, attorney general and finally Governor of Massachusetts, was the original projector. It was a time of canal building, both in England and America; the future of transportation, certainly of heavy freight, was believed to lie with the artificial waterway. Sullivan dreamed of a canal to connect Boston with the Merrimac River. The building would not be impractical, for there was an elevation of only a little more than one hundred feet to overcome. From the northern end of this canal a waterway suitable for barges lay open by the Merrimac River to Concord. Thence Sullivan saw in his imagination another canal by way of Lake Sunapee to the Connecticut River, and by connecting streams to the heart of Vermont, if not indeed to Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence. By this means the trade between Boston and the north country was to be widely expanded, much to the profit of those far-sighted citizens who should dig and manage the canal.

The plan, as events proved, was not chimerical, at least as far as the Middlesex link in it was concerned. James Sullivan was influential and plausible. He found no great difficulty in interesting other prominent and wealthy men in the enterprise — Colonel Loammi Baldwin, the leading citizen of Woburn, General John Brooks of Medford, later himself Governor of the State, Christopher Gove, James Winthrop and Thomas Russell of Boston, Andrew Craigie of Cambridge, Samuel and Caleb Swan of Charlestown and the Hall family of Medford. The necessary money to begin the work was subscribed, and the canal company was incorporated by the legislature June 22, 1793. Not to delay too long over the details of the construction, it may simply be said that with the assistance of an experienced English canal engineer, Mr. Samuel Weston, a practicable route was surveyed from the Mill Pond at Charlestown, through Medford, South Woburn, Woburn, Wilming-

ton and Billerica, to Chelmsford on the Merrimac. The water wherewith to fill the canal bed was to be taken from the Concord River, a little below Chelmsford; the river was crossed there at grade, and a floating bridge or causeway was built to be used as a tow path.

The excavation, though tedious with the means then available, was not particularly difficult. In addition it was necessary to build twenty locks, to lift or lower the canal barges to different levels, and seven aqueducts where the canal crossed running water. The longest of these aqueducts was at the crossing of the Shawsheen River; it was one hundred thirty-seven feet long, and consisted of a stoutly constructed wooden channel, some thirty feet wide and five feet deep, supported on masonry piers. These piers still stand, lonely memorials of a dead enterprise, near the line between Wilmington and Billerica. The second longest aqueduct crossed the Mystic at West Medford, the third was here in Winchester, where the canal crossed the Aberjona just above the head of Mystic Lake. This was only a little way above the house of the Winchester Boat Club. The youth of the town still go swimming at "the aqueduct," though it requires no little historical imagination to recognize from present appearances the justification for the name.

The canal was finished and ready for business in 1803. It passed through Woburn by the low land behind the Public Library, crossed Pleasant Street, and continued down to the eastern shore of Horn Pond. There a set of locks was necessary, for the shore is much higher at the upper than at the lower end of the pond. The company built a hotel at Woburn Locks, which was a favorable stopping place for bargemen and travelers by the canal, since the barges were only allowed to pass through the canal by daylight. It became, too, in later years the goal of occasional picnic parties from Boston, which visited this region, then considered far out into the country, to enjoy the rustic and solitary beauty of Horn Pond.

Passing down alongside the pond and its outlet, the canal entered the present limits of Winchester not many rods below the pond. It crossed the Horn Pond Brook a little way above the building of the Eastern Felt Company at the foot of Canal Street, and still roughly paralleling the brook, ran over to the shore of Wedge Pond. Thence it passed over the low ground where the Palmer Street

tennis courts are today, crossed Wildwood Street, and passed through a cut that is still recognizable behind the houses on Fletcher Street to Church Street, which it crossed. Its course can still be traced through the lane behind the houses on Sheffield Road to lower Everett Avenue — which did not, of course, then exist. Just beyond Everett Avenue there are still indications of the old tow-path and of the hollow in which stood the lock gates to lower the barges to the level of the aqueduct across the Aberjona.



LOCK IN THE MIDDLESEX CANAL AT HORN POND

From this point the canal ran along the peninsula, partly artificial, above Sandy Beach, turned south, and following in general the line of the Mystic Valley Parkway entered Medford. Another aqueduct spanned the Mystic River near the present Boston Avenue bridge, and the canal, turning eastward now, followed rather closely the bank of the river to Charlestown.

At Church Street in Winchester the canal passed under the

street. The bridge by which the street crossed was long known as Huffmaster's Bridge, taking its name from a curious character named Andrew Huffmaster who lived close by. Huffmaster was an old Hessian soldier, captured in the Revolution, who had made up his mind that America was a better place than Hesse-Cassel in which to live. How he happened to land in our town we know not, but there he was, living in a humble edifice which today we might call a shack, the only habitation on the whole length of Church Street from the old James Converse house almost down to the center, to Cambridge Street. Huffmaster was a quaint figure enough; one old resident declares he wore "knee breeches made of eel skins and a coat braided out of corn husks!"¹ At all events he used corn husks to bottom chairs, and was an itinerant workman at such jobs, known over a wide extent of the surrounding country. He was a good shot and an expert trapper, and eked out his income by taking muskrat and other furs to Boston to sell. Besides all this he was a performer on the old-fashioned bagpipes, and used sometimes to play and dance for his customers in consideration of an additional fee. Huffmaster was married and left children. A grandson of his once lived on the farm just south of Morningside on the road to Arlington.²

To return to the canal. Its construction was directed by Colonel Loammi Baldwin. Its cost up to 1819, when the project at last began to show a profit, was \$1,164,200,³ mainly for the purchase of land and the original construction of canal bed, locks and aqueducts; but considerable sums were spent for repair and improvements.⁴ For example, the aqueduct that carried the canal across the Aberjona here in Winchester was at first supported by timbered piers, but later these were replaced by substantial piers of split granite, remnants of which can still be seen on the shore of upper Mystic at the Narrows, just above the house of the Winchester Boat Club.

For forty years the canal was in operation. Barges, loaded with timber, firewood, granite, ice and a great variety of farm and

¹ N. A. Richardson in *Winchester Star*, December 26, 1900.

² Another grandson was killed in the tornado that tore through Arlington and Medford August 22, 1851. He lived near the West Medford railroad station.

³ Historical Sketch of Middlesex Canal, by Caleb Eddy, Boston, 1843.

⁴ Workmen on the canal were paid \$10 a month, with board and lodging.

country produce, traversed the waterway through the peaceful farms and pastures of Woburn and Winchester to the markets of Boston; and returned laden with every sort of manufactured goods for the people of the back country. Besides the barges of the company, private cargo boats built to fit the canal were allowed to pass through, after paying the required toll. The business was principally with freight; but the company owned two passenger boats, the *General Sullivan* and the *General Washington*, and did something with them.

I have said that pleasure parties were frequent patrons of the canal during the tens, twenties and thirties of the last century. It may be added, in parenthesis, that the towpath was a favorite place for an evening stroll in fine weather — particularly among the young who were romantically inclined. It was for most villages along the line of the canal the accepted Lover's Lane of the neighborhood. That was, we are told, true for Winchester also.

An old diary, fortunately preserved, contains the account of one of the fashionable pleasure parties which were wont to embark on the peaceful waters of the canal and sail sedately on to Horn Pond, which was the usual goal for such picnics. This party was a distinguished one, for it included William Tudor, Mrs. Josiah Quincy, several members of the Buckminster family and, above all, Daniel Webster and Mrs. Webster. The company set forth from Charlestown early on the morning of a July day in 1818. Their craft traversed the marshes of Medford and skirted the beautiful shores of the Mystic Lakes. At the Narrows, here in Winchester, it was lifted by the locks to the level of our West Side fields and continued across them to Horn Pond or "Lake of the Woods" as the romantically minded had dubbed it. The day was spent happily in dining, singing and dancing in the pavilion which the Canal Company had built near the locks on the eastern shore of the pond, the party having been augmented by others who had driven out from Boston, not willing to expose themselves to the "hardships" of a canal voyage.

On the return trip when the picnic party reached the Narrows, where the Aberjona then entered the Upper Mystic Lake, it was discovered to be still so early that they disembarked again to enjoy an hour or more in "Symmes Grove." The cove on which the

Winchester Boat Club's house now stands was observed to be well carpeted with lily pads, among which shone occasional blossoms. One of the young ladies exclaimed that she wished she had some of the lilies. No boat was available and the two or three young men — Harvard students, says the diary — looked dubiously at one another, for they were dressed in their very best.

Then arose the sonorous voice of Mr. Webster, that voice which ere long was to stir the listening Senate with its profound exposition of the Constitution, "If I were a young man," he said, "and a young lady expressed a desire for water lilies, I could not too quickly gratify her."

There was nothing for it after that but for the young men to wade boldly in, up to their knees and beyond, and gather the lilies. The captain of the excursion barge, concerned at their bedraggled appearance, asked with some asperity: "What on earth possessed you to do such a thing?" "Nothing but Mr. Webster's eloquence," was their reply.

"It never brought me lilies before," observed the god-like Daniel, but some one added, "It has brought you laurels, however." And so, vastly pleased with the affair (even the college boys in their wet boots and trousers), the party reëntered the barge and returned in safety to Boston.¹

Mr. John L. Sullivan, a son of Governor Sullivan, was the company's agent in the early years. He was an enterprising, mechanically minded man and conceived the idea of using the still rather unfamiliar power of steam in place of horses to propel his barges. He acquired title to a patent for what was called a "revolving engine," and bought a half interest in the old Symmes mill privilege on the Aberjona, which had been for more than a hundred years the property of the Symmes family. His partner was Captain John Symmes, and these two built a second mill across the river from the old one. Here corn was ground; the old mill contained a lathe and trip hammer for Captain Symmes who was a wheelwright, and was the scene of Mr. Sullivan's experiments with steam power.

We have no blue prints of Sullivan's engine, and no description of its construction that is at all clear. "The whole engine

¹ Moses W. Mann in the *Winchester Star*, July 27, 1906.

revolved," we are told — an explanation that leaves this writer as much in the dark as ever. But in the end the engine was made to work after a fashion. It was installed in one or two canal boats, which it drove through the canal and up the Merrimac to Concord. Tar was used along with wood as fuel. The steamboat alarmed and disgusted dwellers along the canal by the clouds of thick, black, tarry smoke which it belched forth; and one who saw — and heard — the invention at work has handed down the information that the exhaust of the engine could be heard for miles and that the machinery made a noise "like a floating blacksmith ship."¹

The steam barges were not regarded as successful; the wash from the wheel undermined the earthen walls of the canal bed and made expensive repairs necessary. Mr. Sullivan's undertakings bankrupted him at last, and he sold the two mills on the Aberjona — for he had meanwhile bought out Captain Symmes — to one Abner Stowell, from whom one mill quickly, and the other eventually, passed to Robert Bacon, of whom we shall hear more later.

The Middlesex Canal was financially profitable from 1819 to 1836. It might easily have continued to be so had it not been for the appearance of a competitor too strong for it — the steam railway. With the completion of the Boston and Lowell Railroad in 1835, the canal business fell by a third. Within a few years another third had gone. Ruin was inevitable. The resourceful Mr. Eddy, who was then the agent, tried to salvage part of the property by a scheme for using the middle section of the canal as a conduit to bring the Concord River water to furnish a supply for Boston, but his plan fell through. In 1846 the canal was abandoned. Its course here in Winchester has been largely filled in and built upon. The stone superstructure of the aqueduct piers has vanished, to reappear, however, in the walls of the stone farmhouse on the Brooks estate, which the motorist on Grove Street passes halfway between West Medford and Winchester. A block of granite bearing a bronze memorial tablet stands beside the Mystic Valley Parkway, near the line between the two towns, to mark the last vestiges of the old embankment which led the canal from the aqueduct at the Narrows to the eastern shores of the lake — a modest tombstone for what was, in its day, a mighty enterprise.

¹ Moses W. Mann, article in *Medford Historical Register* for September, 1928; Luther R. Symmes, article in *Winchester Press*, October 4, 1901.

CHAPTER X

MEN AND INDUSTRIES OF A CENTURY AGO THE RAILROAD COMES TO TOWN

THE War of 1812 seems not to have made a deep impression on the people of this vicinity. The two militia companies of Woburn, East and West, were still active; indeed in 1808 the second Middlesex regiment of which they were a part held a grand regimental muster on Wyman Plains, as the West Side of Winchester was then called, with a large attendance of interested citizenry, and all the circumstances of rustic gaiety, including, I fear, a general indulgence in New England rum — which had at that time become associated with such spectacles. But neither company was called out for service, and no company was enlisted or mustered in in Woburn. Some local men must have served on the detachments commanded by sergeants who stood guard over bridges, armories and wharves of Boston to protect them against possible hostile acts by British agents. In the records that have been preserved one recognizes the names of Edmund Symmes and Nathaniel and Samuel Richardson, who were certainly Winchester men. But the war did not touch Massachusetts nearly save on the sea and along the coast of Maine, and men from our community were not often drawn into active service.

In September 1815 the town was visited by an extraordinary gale of wind which was long remembered. The damage done to trees was very great; several hundred fruit and shade trees were destroyed, chimneys and roofs suffered, one barn at Washington and Forest streets was blown flat, and several tons of hay scattered over the neighborhood. Those who ventured out in the storm were often blown from their feet and rolled along the ground. Mrs. Jesse Richardson, returning from a neighbor's house with a baby in her arms, saw the infant torn from her hold by the wind and carried over a near-by stone wall. No serious injuries occurred.¹

¹ N. A. Richardson in *Winchester Star*, October 8, 1900.

In 1831 the town of Woburn was again called upon by the state to make a survey of its territory and submit a record of its real estate. Bartholomew Richardson was the surveyor. One full generation had passed since the survey of 1798, and the village of South Woburn showed unmistakable signs of growth. Instead of thirty-five dwelling houses, there were now more than sixty. Most of them were still occupied by scions of old Winchester and Woburn stock — Symmeses, Richardsons, Johnsons, Wymans, Lockes, Gardners, Reeds, Pierces, Parkers and Hutchinsons account for forty-three of them, but there were some new and significant names. W. C. Jarvis, the first lawyer to take up his residence in our village, occupied the Caleb Swan house. His office was at Woburn center, and he represented that town in the legislature. William Grammer was another new resident; with his brother Seth he opened a store on Main Street, near its junction with Washington Street, where, as his son recalled, he sold "Salt Fish, Oil, Molasses, Sugar, Tea, Coffee, Spices, Rum (West India, St. Croix and New England), Brandy, Gin and Wine." This was the second store in Winchester; like the first, it probably did a brisker trade in wet than in dry goods.

Loring Emerson, destined to be an important man in the Winchester of later years, had lately come into the town. He was a cattle dealer and butcher; a son-in-law of Colonel Bill Russell, he lived in Colonel Bill's old house on Cambridge Street, at the corner of the present Calumet Road.

More important than any of these were two families who had taken over two of the mill privileges in the village and were developing them with energy and success — the Cutters and the Bacons. It was in 1810 that John Cutter bought the grist-mill built by Joseph Richardson on Horn Pond Brook near the spot where Main Street crossed it. Mr. Cutter was an enterprising man who had been interested in mills all his life and had experimented with mills driven by wind as well as water. He had even gone so far afield as the West Indies where he built a mill for grinding sugar cane and as Canada where he had a windmill for grinding corn. He was born at Menotomy (Arlington), where his family was long established, but he came to South Woburn from Medford, where he had various business interests. He built a new dam for the Richardson mill and

flooded back a good-sized pond, long since filled in; being a good business man he made the mill pay.

John Cutter had a large family; seven of his children were sons, and three of them, Stephen, Henry and Sullivan, also made their homes in our village. After their father's death in 1825, Stephen and Henry took over the old mill. The day of grist-mills was passing; the brothers used their power first for carding wool and making machines for splitting leather, and later for sawing mahogany and other fancy woods. They expanded their business to the importation of mahogany and were extremely successful therein. In 1840 the old mill burned, but was immediately replaced by a better one, into which — for reasons of sentiment mainly — the Cutters put a pair of millstones for grinding corn as well as the saws and other machinery needed in their lumber business. As time went on, two sons-in-law of Stephen Cutter, Oliver R. Clark and Charles Hall, were admitted to the firm. All these families, as well as Stephen H. Cutter, a son of Stephen, and Stephen A. Holt, a son-in-law of Henry, lived along Main Street, north of the Cutter mill, in substantial houses, most of which are still standing. Those of Sullivan, Stephen and Stephen H. Cutter, and Mr. Clark stood on the easterly side of the way; those of Henry Cutter, Mr. Holt and Mr. Hall on the opposite side. When I add that two other brothers of Stephen and Henry Cutter, Captain John who was a sea captain, and Andrew who was employed in his brother's business, lived for several years in the same neighborhood, no one will be surprised to know that this part of Winchester was long popularly known as Cutter Village, a name which one still hears used today.

All the Cutters were prominent in town affairs, citizens of substance. Stephen was perhaps the most interesting; in addition to sound business sense and a mechanical ingenuity that served him well in designing and improving machinery, he was a musician. For years he was the leader of the choir in the Congregational Church, the founding of which we shall soon chronicle, and until the building was equipped with an organ, Mr. Cutter's violin, always true and sweet, led the congregation in the singing of hymns.

At the other end of the town the Bacon family established itself in 1824 when Robert Bacon, of a family well known in Boston,

bought one of the Symmes mills on the lower course of the Aberjona and began the manufacture of felt. Mr. Bacon was as successful in business as the Cutters. He controlled two or three recently patented improvements in felting machinery, to which he added some further ingenious ideas of his own. In one year in his Aberjona mill, he is said to have formed 85,000 hat bodies, besides making a quantity of felt for other purposes. When Mr. Bacon moved here he lived in the old Symmes dwelling house beside the mill, but before many years he built the handsome house with brick ends which stands on the Mystic Valley Parkway near the bridge that crosses the river just above its union with Upper Mystic Lake. His son John H. Bacon succeeded him in the old house by the mill; but before many years he too moved to the other side of the river and bought the farm of Josiah Symmes, which lay south of Bacon Street, its house on the rising ground which is now Lakeview Road.¹ The land, which stretched down to Symmes's meadow through which the Aberjona still meandered,² he beautified with some care, and his gardens were widely known and admired.

The Bacon mills had a chequered career. There were two mills by the riverside, as we said in the previous chapter. Both eventually came to be the property of Robert Bacon, and both, it seems, were burned in 1843. They were immediately rebuilt, but Mr. Bacon leased them to a variety of small industries — a cotton batting factory, operated by one Caleb Mills, a sash and blind shop, a print works, and a mahogany sawing mill in which Sullivan Cutter was interested with a Mr. Parker. One of the mills was burned down again but rebuilt, only to be burned a third time.³

In the meantime John H. Bacon, going into business on his own account, had put up another mill near his house, at the present Lakeview Road. There the manufacture of felt was continued successfully until about 1880, when that mill in turn went up in smoke. It was replaced by the mill which still stands by the

¹ Josiah Symmes subsequently bought the land on the shore of Mystic Lake opposite the Country Club, now owned by S. S. Langley. While digging a well for the house he meant to build, Symmes was buried by the caving-in of the earth. He was dead when his body was recovered. It was in 1844.

² The upper part of Upper Mystic Lake did not exist until 1863 when it was formed by the flooding of the old meadow by the building of the Charlestown Water Works dam at the parting between the two lakes.

³ Article by L. R. Symmes, Winchester Press, October 4, 1901. Also printed in Medford Historical Register, Vol. 31, No. 3.

railroad tracks at the foot of Grove Place, and still (1936) produces felt. The two older mills at the old Symmes dam disappeared in 1863, when Charlestown began to take water from the Upper Mystic Lake. The mill privileges were taken by "eminent domain" and the dams were blown up with explosives.

The activities of the Bacons led to the employment of a number of men and the erection of several houses in the vicinity of the mills. Like the Cutters the Bacons gave their name — for a time — to the little settlement so formed, which was locally known as Baconville. Here lived Robert Bacon's younger son Charles N. Bacon, and here on the higher land along Grove Street still live his descendants of a later generation, Charles N., Robert and Charles F. Bacon.

As the survey of 1798 was accompanied by the construction of the Middlesex Canal, that of 1831 was quickly followed by the inception of a greater advance in transportation, the Boston and Lowell Railroad. This year of 1831 may indeed be taken as a most significant landmark in Winchester history. Before that year still a community of scattered farms, rural in character in spite of a few promising industries, it was shortly to become, with the advent of the railroad, a thriving and busy village, attracting first a number of manufacturing enterprises and then a flood of new citizens who recognized its advantages as a place of suburban residence. Within twenty years it had grown to such size that it had separated from the mother town and attained to the dignity of municipal independence. For this rapid change in the character of the village, the railroad was chiefly responsible.

The Boston and Lowell road was projected in 1831; it is therefore one of the very earliest steam railways in the country. It was undertaken through the enterprise of Patrick T. Jackson, who with Francis C. Lowell, Kirk Boott, Paul Moody and others had established the first great cotton mills at the falls of the Merrimac, around which grew up the city of Lowell. Mr. Jackson found the existing means of transportation inadequate for bringing to the mills the great quantities of raw cotton required and for returning to Boston the cotton goods he manufactured. The Middlesex Canal was closed by ice four months in the year, and transportation over



THE ROBERT BACON HOUSE

the roads was slow and expensive. He had, however, learned of the promising experiments made in England with the steam locomotive; he believed the railroad to be the answer to all his difficulties, and succeeded in persuading his associates at Lowell and a number of Boston capitalists besides to furnish the money for the new road.

In the beginning it was thought of as a means of transporting freight only, a possible passenger business was hardly taken into account at all. That is why the roadbed as surveyed and built upon avoided the thriving villages of Medford, Woburn, Wilmington and Billerica. It passed through open country almost all the way, following quite closely the old depression through which ages before the preglacial Merrimac had flowed. Even at South Woburn (Winchester) through which the rails were laid there was at first no provision for taking on or discharging passengers. The first station, which stood beside the tracks where they crossed Main Street and on the easterly side of the road, was not occupied until about 1837,¹ when the company began to find that people as well as goods could become a profitable source of revenue. Where the rails crossed Church and Main streets, ponderous gates were erected to protect passers-by from the peril of being run over by the three or four trains a day that hurtled past at perhaps fifteen or twenty miles an hour, but there was for a time no gate tender. The gates were pushed back and forth by bystanders when the whistle of an approaching train was heard.² But primitive as they were, these gates were so novel a local phenomenon that for a time they gave to the village which had in succession been called Waterfield, Black Horse Village and South Woburn a new name, "Woburn Gates."

The first station agent was one John Donohue; he was soon succeeded by Captain Nathan Jaquith, a militia officer who was well regarded for his energy, his solid character and his affable manners. Captain Jaquith combined the offices of depot master, baggage man and gate tender; he also accommodated boarders in his house at the corner of Main and Church streets, and having bought a steady horse from Dr. Sylvanus Plympton of Woburn he acquired also a new two-seated covered carriage and introduced the livery business into the growing village.³ He lived to a great age;

¹ It was originally a shoe shop no more than fifteen feet square.

² Winchester Record, Vol. I, page 57.

³ Winchester Record, Vol. I, page 58.

at ninety he is said to have walked the seventeen miles from Winchester to Lowell.

The railway was not finished until 1835. During the three or four years before that its construction was a source of immense excitement to our little village. The patronage of engineers and construction bosses gave a momentary air of bustle and prosperity to the decaying Black Horse Tavern, though it is related that the resultant profit was small since some of them disappeared without settling with the landlord. One Winchester industry that did well by the railroad was the blacksmith and iron working shop of the Johnson brothers, Francis and Nathan B., which stood on Main Street at what is now the corner of Mt. Pleasant Street.

This shop, or rather its predecessor, which stood a little farther south, was originally owned by Captain Joseph Brown, a Revolutionary veteran, a good workman, a leading citizen and a man distinguished for generosity and kindness of heart. Francis Johnson, the elder of the two brothers, learned his trade as an apprentice with Captain Brown. It is related that once when the captain had gone to Boston, leaving his apprentice with no special work to do, young Johnson amused himself by turning out what may be thought of as his "masterpiece," entitling him to full and free standing in his craft. In that rural settlement hogs were still allowed to roam at large; they could not, however, get about on ice. On this particular day, it seems, there was ice on the ground, so Francis Johnson made a set of little shoes, calked them and nailed them to the feet of the captain's porker. When the master returned from town, the hog, neatly shod, was trotting about happily on the ice-covered road. Captain Brown, greatly pleased with his pupil's ingenuity, gave him a week's vacation on the spot.¹

After Brown's death Francis Johnson succeeded to the business and taught his younger brother Nathan the trade. Both were natives of our West Side and descendants of Major William Johnson and so of his father Captain Edward. Both were excellent iron workers and sound business men. They were far more than shoers of horses or oxen, as most blacksmiths were in those days. Their shop turned out a great variety of articles in iron. We hear of them forging the knives for the leather splitting machines in the Cutter

¹ N. A. Richardson in the *Winchester Star*. Article preserved in his scrapbook.

mill and elsewhere. They were employed to furnish a great amount of hardware and ironmongery for the new railway; they had a monopoly in making tie bolts for it. In those days their shop was a busy place, its forges glowing and its chimney belching sparks far into the night.

Francis Johnson was always known by his title of "major." Not ambitious for civil office, he was fond of military life. He was a militia captain almost by the time he was of age, and so good an officer that he was, not long afterward, commissioned as major in the Second Middlesex regiment. He lived across the street from his shop. His brother Nathan was a more active figure in the town life, often in responsible office in church and town. He was later one of the first selectmen of Winchester, a man whose erect form, thick head of curly white hair, searching dark eyes and tight-lipped mouth gave him a striking and memorable appearance.¹

A former resident of Winchester² has set down his memories of the day the first railway train carrying passengers ran through our village on its way to Lowell. It was May 27, 1835. Every house not only in South Woburn but for miles around was deserted that morning. Thousands lined the tracks to see the puffing little locomotive draw its train of cars, each shaped very much like the stage coaches that still travelled the roads. Mr. Teel, then a small boy, was seized with the impulse to lay a copper penny on the track to see what the engine would do to it. He was caught in the act by Colonel S. B. White, who was among the interested throng, and severely reprimanded. However, the colonel's curiosity was likewise aroused. He thought that the penny might have thrown the



THE FIRST RAILWAY TRAIN

¹ Deacon Johnson built the house now numbered 21 Washington Street, a dignified house with a high pillared portico, about 1840.

² Warren Teel, Winchester Record, Vol. I, page 285.

engine from the track, but that a thin silver sixpence might be safely risked. He took one from his pocket and gave it to the boy, who laid it carefully on the rails. Presently the train made its appearance; as it came nearer and nearer, both man and boy, panic struck by the thought of what might happen if the coin should derail the locomotive, leaped forward to pick it from the track. And as the train rattled by, its coaches full of cheering citizens, Colonel White, says Mr. Teel, gazed after it and remarked, "Sho! You might have put a silver dollar on the rail, and no harm done!"

The building of the railroad through the very center of South Woburn gave an immediate fillip to the growth of the village. Several far-sighted business men in Woburn, recognizing the advantages which rail transportation would offer, removed from the center of the town and came to live in South Woburn. One of the first was Samuel Steele Richardson, a singular and interesting man, who was already conducting a successful shoemaking business at Woburn center. He bought the Abel Richardson estate at our village center, which included the remnants of the old Edward Converse farm, and the mill on the Aberjona built almost two hundred years before. The old mill had fallen into decay; its grinding stones lay buried beneath the water of the river. Mr. Richardson tore down the ruins and erected a new and larger mill on their site. He built another shop below it which derived its power from the river also, and a shoe shop for his own use on the spot where Lyceum Hall now stands. The greater part of the new mill and the adjoining shop was let out to a variety of small industries attracted to the village by its new importance. There were at least two sash and blind businesses, one of them operated by Gardner Symmes, a dye shop owned by one John Whittemore, two lasting machines and a manufactory of leather splitting machinery run by Asa P. Johnson, while in part of the mill Amos Whittemore was running a shoe-pegging machine he had himself invented — one of the earliest and most ingenious articles of shoe machinery made in this country.¹ Mr. Richardson himself had rooms in the new mill, where his wood-working lathes turned out door knobs, clock pillows and bedsteads. What a hive of industry the old Converse water power was now sup-

¹ Mr. Whittemore invented many machines for many purposes. See an article concerning him in Winchester Record, Vol. I, page 349.

porting, and how gratified Samuel Steele Richardson must have been at the sight, for no busier, more restless, more visionary soul than his ever occupied a human body!

Mr. Richardson was an eccentric, there is no doubt about that. He was a typical Yankee trader; "he would buy a dilapidated meetinghouse, swap it for a sunken steamboat and give or take the difference in a broken-down stagecoach. From Portland to New Orleans he would travel, often in advance of railroads or steamboats, with his coat under his arm, one shoe in his hand and a change of linen in his pocket; never waiting for anyone yet always behind in starting. Once he missed the steamboat at Memphis, but before the boat got to the next landing he was there ready to jump on board. . . . He could write an instrument no lawyer could explain and no court overrule. He could sell real estate and give what looked like a clear title, but time would show that he still owned a corner of it, or a right of way over or under it. He would overreach you in a trade, and next day do you a favor that cost him more than he had gained."¹ He had real estate and business interests in a dozen different towns; in Winchester he was once an owner of the Black Horse Tavern. In the crash of 1837 he went down, overloaded by his numerous speculations, but he revived, plunged again into a variety of enterprises and kept afloat until the panic of 1857 ruined him again, this time beyond successful recovery.

Another Woburn citizen of note, whose temperament and character were in sharp contrast to Mr. Richardson's but who like him staked his future on the growth and prosperity of South Woburn, was Deacon Benjamin F. Thompson. This man was of the distinguished family, associated with Woburn since 1640, which produced Count Rumford. Deacon Thompson was a son of Major Abijah Thompson who was the first to introduce the tanning of leather on a large commercial scale in Woburn. The son learned the leather business in his father's tannery, and then went into business for himself with marked success. In 1838 he resolved to remove to our village and built a good-sized tannery beside the railway tracks on what is now Manchester Field. The present Thompson Street was originally the lane that led down to his leather works. Deacon Thompson was a man of mark, a sound citizen and

¹ N. A. Richardson in *Woburn Journal* of December 17, 1886.

a capable business man of high integrity. He entertained no visions and engaged in no far-reaching speculations. There are no amusing stories to tell of him, but he was one of the real fathers of the embryo town of Winchester.

Deacon Thompson lived first in a house at the corner of Main and Thompson streets but he soon got possession of the old Converse or Abel Richardson property, and the venerable house that stood there having been removed, Deacon Thompson built a new one on that historic site. The necessities of business long since changed the house into a store and then swept it aside for the block where the Woolworth store stands. Both of Deacon Thompson's sons, Stephen and Abijah, were life-long residents of Winchester; Abijah was conspicuous among the group of men who through the agency of the old Winchester Historical Society collected and perpetuated so much material for which the present writer can never be sufficiently grateful.

A third man who was destined to play an important part in Winchester industry was Harrison Parker. A native of Reading, Mr. Parker married a lady from the numerous Richardson family of Winchester. Early in the thirties he took over the old Jeduthan Richardson mill where the Winn watch hand factory now stands, and began there the cutting of mahogany veneers in partnership with his brother, Loa Parker. When, in 1841, the affairs of S. S. Richardson were at their worst, Mr. Parker bought from him the mill on the old Converse site and transferred his growing business thither. His business succeeded; it was made more profitable by the use of a very ingenious veneer cutting machine which Mr. Parker himself perfected. For years the splendid teams of eight or even ten horses which drew the great logs of mahogany and rosewood from the ships at Boston to the Parker mill were familiar sights along the road to Winchester. Old timers recalled that the driver was so skillful that he had reins only on the wheel horses, guiding the others entirely by whip and voice. For some years Mr. Parker occupied the mill, sharing it, after 1845, with Joel Whitney who came hither from Wakefield to operate a machine shop and engage in the manufacture of leather working machinery, for which in course of time he obtained several valuable patents.

Eventually the Parker business was removed to Charlestown,

where Mr. Parker had established large yards for the sale of mahogany and other tropical woods. But he continued to live in Winchester. His first house had been at the Highlands, his second was near the spot where the Unitarian Church now stands. His nephew, Harrison Parker, 2d, and his son-in-law Irving S. Palmer continued the business successfully after his death. Both lived in Winchester and were among the prominent citizens the years before and just after the turn of the century. The house of Harrison Parker the younger, on Main Street not far beyond the Junior High School, has only recently been pulled down. A grand-nephew of the first Harrison Parker¹ and several children of the fourth generation still live in Winchester.

I have spoken of Joel Whitney as occupying a part of the mill at the center built by S. S. Richardson and later owned by Harrison Parker. The Whitney family deserves more than casual mention. Joel Whitney was an inventive genius and a mechanic of versatile ability. He carried on in his part of the building a varied industry. He built veneering machines, a number of machines for splitting and working leather and even printing presses.² After 1857 he became sole owner of the mill, where he and his son, Arthur E. Whitney, continued a profitable business for many years. In 1909 the old mill was sold to the town for its park development, and the building of machinery was transferred to a new factory farther north on Main Street. The building still stands, but Mr. Whitney's grandson, Robert F. Whitney, retired from the business some years since.

Arthur E. Whitney was all his life a notable citizen of the town. He held many public offices, was always an interesting figure in town meetings and was also a diligent local historian, to whose careful researches we owe much of our knowledge of the early history of the town.

In addition to all the new industrial activities that have been mentioned, Cephas Church and Joshua Lane acquired in 1847 the old Belknap mill privilege on Horn Pond Brook, and began there the manufacture of pianoforte cases in mahogany and other expensive woods, which they continued until 1867, when they were succeeded by the firm of Cowdery, Cobb and Nichols.

¹ Mr. Gordon Parker.

² N. A. Richardson in the *Winchester Star*. Article preserved in his scrapbook.

The growth of the village of South Woburn in consequence of all these thriving enterprises became for the first time in its long history rapid. A considerable number of workmen were naturally attracted thither by the employment offered them by the Cutters, the Bacons, Parker, Whitney, Church & Lane and others. Other residents came because of the charms of the little village, which by reason of the railroad was easily accessible from Boston. Something like a modest real estate boom occurred. Some of the farms along Main Street and Richardson's Row were divided into building lots, and houses sprang up upon them. Private ways, later to become streets, were opened up the hillside where Vine Street, Park Street, Mt. Vernon Street, Myrtle Street, Winthrop Street, Walnut Street, Elm Street, Kendall Street and Stevens Street are now to be found, and dwelling houses began to dot them. The local builders Sumner Richardson, Gardner Symmes, Dana Fay and John H. Coats were busy men. Mr. Coats was especially enterprising. In the forties and early fifties he built and sold at least a dozen houses along Main Street including the original home of James F. Dwinell, the house long known as the residence of Thomas W. Lawson, and that owned by Arthur E. Whitney, which was subsequently moved around the corner into Mystic Avenue.

For some reason Church Street was long neglected in this season of active house building. Until 1850 the only house along its mile of length between the foot of Rangeley, where stood the "Parker and Collins" house, and Cambridge streets was one at the corner of Wildwood Street built by Gardner Symmes. It was later moved back on to Wildwood Street and still stands. In this house lived Ebenezer Smith, the mysterious donor of a town clock to the infant town of Winchester. The great stretches of the West Side, now so thickly built upon, were in 1840, and remained for many years thereafter, farm land mostly owned and tilled by the Wymans, Marshall, George and William.

As the houses multiplied stores to serve the community began to appear. John Symmes came out from Boston and opened one on Main Street where the Vinton house later arose. Mr. Symmes was succeeded shortly by Humphrey B. Howe and he in turn by John Albert Symmes.

Another store which became for some years the principal

emporium of the village was built at the center just north of the corner of Main and Thompson streets. Sumner Richardson was the builder. James Bridge was the first occupant (1843), an old-time Yankee merchant of whom it was said that "he never pulled the fins off a salt fish until he had weighed and sold it."¹ This was the store later occupied by Edmund Sanderson with Alvin Taylor as a partner, who not only maintained a well-stocked general store but initiated an express business to Boston. In still later times it was kept by B. F. Holbrook. It served in its time as most stores of the kind in New England villages have done, as the popular meeting place of citizens in search of local news or eager for political discussion.

Mr. Sanderson was more interested in conducting and building up his express business than in storekeeping. He and his partner Taylor had removed in 1848 to a new store built for them by S. S. Richardson on Main Street at the corner of Main and Park streets. Four years later they dissolved their partnership, and Mr. Sanderson devoted himself to the express enterprise which had so grown that daily trips to Boston were necessary, and a stable of four horses was maintained. This business is the direct ancestor of that of today, Mr. Sanderson, Major Alanson Winn, Denis B. Winn, and Daniel Kelley and Daniel W. Hawes having engaged in it in succession. Mr. Sanderson himself returned to the grocery business in 1858, adding to it a stock of hardware, and for thirty years his store at the corner of Park Street was one of the landmarks of the town.

In 1841 the United States government took cognizance of the growing importance of South Woburn by establishing a post office here. The first postmaster was Dr. Moses Collins Greene; his commission bears date of September 8, 1841. While he lived here — which was not long — Dr. Greene occupied the house then called the Wakefield house, almost directly across the street from the Sanderson store, and the post office was under the same roof. The first mails were, however, opened and distributed in the little railway station beside the tracks.²

Humphrey B. Howe became postmaster on December 29,

¹ N. A. Richardson.

² Winchester Record, Vol. III, page 90.

1842. The office travelled up Main Street to his store, to which reference has already been made, but soon returned to the center when Mr. Howe removed his business to a building near the corner of Thompson Street.

The third postmaster (1844) was Nathaniel A. Richardson, the enthusiastic local historian to whose reminiscences the present writer is so heavily indebted. He served until 1850; the office at first remained in Mr. Howe's store, but in 1848 it was removed to the new store of Taylor and Sanderson, and in 1850 Mr. Alvin Taylor himself became our fourth postmaster. The later peregrinations of the post office until its permanent location in the handsome government building on Waterfield Road will later be recorded.

The postal business in the early days was curiously unlike that to which we are accustomed. Prepayment of letters was rare. They were generally "literally sold at the post office, for the postage (either $6\frac{1}{4}$, $12\frac{1}{2}$, $18\frac{3}{4}$ or 25 cents according to distance) was to be paid on delivery. The letter when mailed was accompanied by a bill stating the charge to be made, and the whole wrapped in another paper, tied with string. The postmaster must untie and save both string and wrapper, impaling the bill on a spindle for use in settling his accounts with the government."¹ The letter was delivered only on payment of the postage charged. And that in the forties of the last century was considered the acme of postal convenience and efficiency.

The first physician to live in Winchester — or as it was then, South Woburn — was Dr. Moses C. Greene whom we have already seen as the first postmaster also. But he was a resident here less than two years and seems not to have done much at the practice of medicine. The first really to settle in the village was Dr. William Ingalls, who came here in 1846 and remained until the Civil War. His first house was in Thompson Street, probably that now numbered 33. Later he lived on the corner of Main and Mt. Vernon streets where the Brown and Stanton Block now stands. Dr. Ingalls was a capable physician and a surgeon as well. He was a graduate of the Harvard Medical School (1836) and practised in Boston both before coming to Winchester and after leaving it. While he lived here he was a surgeon at the Marine Hospital in

¹ Winchester Record, Vol. III, page 90.

Chelsea, during the war he was a military surgeon attached first to the 5th and then the 59th Massachusetts Regiment, and after the war we find him on the surgical staffs of the Boston City and Children's Hospitals. Dr. Ingalls lived to be ninety; he died in Roxbury in 1903.¹

Shortly after Dr. Ingalls was attracted to the fast-growing suburb of South Woburn he was joined by a brother practitioner, Dr. Alonzo Chapin. Dr. Chapin was an Amherst graduate, who received his medical education in Philadelphia. He and his wife were among the earliest missionaries sent out by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. They were settled in Hawaii, or the Sandwich Islands as they were then called, and remained there until Mrs. Chapin's health required that she return to this country. Dr. Chapin practised thirty years in Winchester, greatly beloved and highly respected. He was deeply interested in the schools of the infant town and for many years he was a member of the School Committee. The Chapin School which used to stand on Swanton Street was named in his honor. Mrs. Chapin was no less useful in Winchester in her own way; for she bore her part in all the charitable and cultural activities in the town.

For a few years Dr. Richard U. Piper was a resident of Winchester, living on Walnut Street. Dr. Piper was a man of learning, but of a somewhat eccentric personality. He had some pretensions to being an artist as well as a physician. He was the painter of the view of Winchester center which is one of the illustrations of this book. He was also the author of a large volume on surgery, enriched by almost two thousand engravings from his own drawings. The book was highly regarded by the medical profession in its day. Dr. Piper removed to Woburn about 1850 and practised there for forty years or more.²

¹ History of Harvard Medical School.

² Woburn *Journal*, January 24, 1852.

CHAPTER XI

THE FIRST CHURCH. INCORPORATION AGITATED

ON the third of March, 1839, there was gathered in the little schoolhouse that stood on Washington Street at the foot of the slope on which the Skillings house now stands a company of earnest men, met to take counsel concerning the establishment of a Congregational church in South Woburn. For two hundred years, lacking only three, the people of this vicinity had attended and supported the old church in Woburn two miles away. But it was felt that the village of South Woburn had already grown so much, and gave promise of growing so much faster in the future, that it ought no longer to be without its own church.

I have already outlined something of the history of the Woburn church up until the year 1758. Following that year it continued much as it had in the past, often in trouble as to its ministers but retaining so much vitality that it could endure the secession of many of its members to form the churches in Burlington and Wilmington, preserve its orthodoxy against the assaults of Unitarianism to which so many Congregational churches in Massachusetts surrendered, and be regarded in 1839 as one of the strong churches in its denomination.

Few churches have had so much controversy over its pastors. The story of the long feud between the friends of Rev. Mr. Fox and Rev. Mr. Jackson has been told. In 1758, both of these ministers having died, the church seemed for a time to be united under Rev. Josiah Sherman, an eloquent preacher and an able man. But ere long financial troubles arose. Mr. Sherman was dissatisfied with his salary, which he found insufficient to his needs. The parish never quite met his desires either as to salary or to provision for his support in case of future incapacity. There was more or less wrangling over the matter for some years; it ended in Mr. Sherman's asking and receiving his dismissal in 1775.

But the affair left deep scars behind. Many of the church

members were devoted to Mr. Sherman and indignant with their brethren who had made it impossible for him to stay. For two years Woburn had no settled minister. The two parties within the church found it hard to agree on any candidate, and whenever they did the candidate shied off and decided not to accept his call. At last in 1785 Rev. Samuel Sargeant entered upon the vacant pastorate, but his path was a rough one. The division within the church continued; he was not the man to heal it. A good many of his parishioners who were dissatisfied with his election from the first, left to attend other churches in Woburn. Mr. Sargeant could not collect his salary in full and had to sue for it; the parish made no secret of the fact that it wished to get rid of him.¹

Nevertheless Mr. Sargeant clung to his office for fourteen years, when at last an Ecclesiastical Council, called by the Church, recommended his dismissal. His successor was the Rev. Joseph Chickering, a good and holy man, who had the misfortune after some years of peace to fall into a quarrel with one of the most influential of his parishioners over a parcel of land which the layman wished to buy of the clergyman. That led to fresh divisions within the church and, though the great majority seems to have sympathized with the minister, the situation gradually became so unpleasant that Mr. Chickering decided to resign, which he did in 1821.

He was in turn succeeded by Rev. Joseph Bennett, under whose ministrations quiet and harmony descended upon a church that had been sorely tried. Mr. Bennett was still the pastor when, in 1839, the first steps were taken to create a new church in South Woburn — at the expense, of course, of the membership of the venerable church in Woburn.

The meeting at the district schoolhouse on March 3, 1839 chose Zachariah Symmes as chairman. Those present were apparently united in favor of setting up a new church in South Woburn. It was pointed out that more than a hundred members of the old church lived in this neighborhood, including three of its deacons, B. F. Thompson, Nathan B. Johnson and Marshall Wyman. The village was growing fast; there would soon be a much larger congregation to be depended on, and it was not right that so thriving a community should be without religious opportunities in its midst.

¹ Sewall, History of Woburn, page 438.

Deacon Thompson, Deacon Johnson and Stephen Cutter were appointed a committee to draw up a petition to be addressed to the Woburn church and requesting it to consider whether the time had not come for the formation of another Congregational church within the limits of the town.

The Woburn church, by no means ready to part with so large a part of its membership, asked to be better informed concerning the reasons why it should consent to such a separation. Another petition was accordingly drawn up — probably by the same committee — and duly presented. From it we take the following extracts:

“We want the stated means of grace, the preached word and the ordinances of the gospel in that part of the town where we live. . . .

“That the feeble among us and those who have not the means of conveyance may be better accommodated. That persons of good moral character and sound religious principles may be induced to come and settle with us.

“That the multitude among us whose sense of duty and love of the commands of God are not powerful enough to induce them to go far to meeting, may have the gospel brought to them.

“That our sons and daughters may be delivered from that example which springs from neglected means of grace.

“That the great and increasing moral and religious wants of this whole town may be better supplied. . . .

“Finally that sinners may be converted, souls saved and God glorified.”¹

Cogent reasons all, and excellently expressed. But the Woburn church was still not ready to lend its aid to the project or to express its sympathy with a proposal which, if carried out, would obviously weaken its own organization. At a church meeting on April 11, 1839, the Woburn church voted to postpone all consideration of the petition for a year; and when the matter was taken up at the

¹ Rev. George Cooke in Winchester Record, Vol. II, page 105. The petitions were signed by B. F. Thompson, Stephen and Sullivan Cutter, Zachariah, Horatio and J. B. Symmes, Nathan B., Francis and Francis, Jr. Johnson, Samuel S., Caleb and Sumner Richardson, Samuel B. White, W. T. Perry, Timothy W. and Artemas Mead, John Robinson, Nathan Jaquith, Oliver R. Clark, Rufus Wade and Alvah Hatch.

meeting in April 1840 the petition was dismissed, since the proposal "contemplated a division of the church, which was considered inexpedient by the majority."

But the people of South Woburn did not mean to let their plans depend on the consent or approval of the mother church. Convinced of the necessity of a new church, they waited courteously for the Woburn church to take final action on their petition. No sooner did they hear of the dismissal thereof than they determined to take the matter wholly into their own hands.

At a meeting held on May 12, 1840, at the Wakefield house,¹ so-called, at the center, it was voted to organize a new Congregational Society without delay. A petition signed by Deacon B. F. Thompson, Stephen Cutter, Stephen Swan, Sumner Richardson and Alvah Hatch was addressed to Colonel Leonard Thompson, a Justice of the Peace in Woburn, requesting him to issue a warrant for a meeting of legal voters interested in forming such a society. The warrant was duly issued, and on June first the meeting was held, once more in the schoolhouse on Washington Street.

The society was properly organized by the election of Zachariah Symmes as Moderator, Sumner Richardson as Clerk, Benjamin F. Thompson as Treasurer, Stephen Cutter, Harrison Parker and John Fiske as Parish Committee, S. B. White as Collector, and Nathan B. Johnson and Stephen Symmes as Auditors. It was then voted to build a meetinghouse immediately, at a cost not to exceed \$5,000, and a committee consisting of Deacon Thompson, Deacon N. B. Johnson, Deacon Marshall Wyman, Henry Cutter, Sumner Richardson, Stephen Swan and Harrison Parker was chosen to have charge of the building.

That the plans of the new society had been well perfected in advance is apparent from the promptness with which the committee went to work. On June 5, only four days after its appointment, it purchased from Thomas Collins for \$125 an acre and a quarter of land, more or less, lying on the slope between Church Street and Wedge Pond; and on the same day it acquired from the Boston and Lowell Railroad for \$50 some eight thousand square

¹ The Wakefield house, so named from its builder, was the first house north of the railroad crossing on the easterly side of Main Street. In later years Cogswell's bakery was in this house.

feet additional, adjoining on the east the land bought of Mr. Collins.¹

The site thus selected (it is the same still occupied by the Congregational Church) was happily chosen. It occupies a gentle elevation above the very center of the town, just such an elevation as the New England folk from time immemorial have loved to crown with their places of worship. Its appearance in 1840 was not what it is today, for then the slope rose much higher toward the pond and terminated in a rather conical hill of gravel covered with a growth of small pines. It was necessary to level off this summit, and the work was almost wholly done by volunteer labor. Many a leading citizen of the town and many still young, who were in after years equally prominent in Winchester affairs, bore a hand with pick and shovel in the toilsome task of grading off the "church hill."²

On this sightly lot the meetinghouse was erected with admirable expedition. The corner stone was laid on July 27;³ by October 11 the building was so far along that it was possible to hold a parish meeting in the vestry, and before the end of the year the church was completed and ready for dedication. The South Congregational Society of Woburn thus presented to the parent church what the French call neatly a *fait accompli*. At the meeting of October 11 a letter was adopted and signed by an even hundred of the members of the old Woburn church living in South Woburn. The letter informed the parent church — as if it stood in need of information — of the formation of the new society, and requested that letters of dismissal be granted to the five score subscribers, that they might ally themselves with the new church. To such a request, courteously presented, there was but one answer to make; the Woburn church granted the letters of dismissal and the hundred men and women were free to constitute themselves as the "South Congregational Church in Woburn."

The exercises at the laying of the corner stone of the meetinghouse had included a prayer by Rev. Mr. Bennett of Woburn and

¹ A fuller account of these transactions, as well as an extended history of the early history of the church prepared by Rev. Leander Thompson, Mr. Abijah Thompson and others, is to be found in the *Winchester Press*, Vol. I, Nos. 20 to 50.

² *Winchester Press*, Vol. I, No. 21, quoted from Rev. George Cooke.

³ *Winchester Record*, Vol. I, page 60.

an address by Rev. Mr. Emerson of South Reading (Wakefield). It was marked also by the singing of an original hymn by Sumner Richardson, clerk of the parish, which is creditable enough to justify quotation. It ran:

“Eternal God, before Thy throne
Thy people now their voices raise;
And while we consecrate this stone,
May all our hearts be joined in praise.

Thou precious, sure Foundation Stone
That ancient builders did reject,
Thy presence grant, Thy people own,
The workmen bless, the work protect.

Come Holy Spirit, peaceful Dove,
And richest blessings on us pour;
Fill all our hearts with Christian love
From this the consecrating hour.

Oh grant, Thou Sacred One in Three,
That all our hearts be joined in one!
And that the House we build for Thee
May e'er be chosen for Thine own.”

The exercises at the dedication of the church fell on December 30, 1840. Another original hymn, no doubt also by Mr. Richardson, was sung. Rev. Mr. Emerson and Rev. Mr. Bennett again assisted, and the sermon was preached by Rev. Daniel Crosby of Charlestown.

Six weeks earlier¹ a council consisting of pastors and delegates from Woburn, South Reading, Tewksbury, Charlestown and Medford had met at the house of Deacon B. F. Thompson and, finding everything in proper form, had voted to constitute the subscribers to the letter of October 11, referred to above, as the South Congregational Church in Woburn. Thus organized and provided with a meetinghouse the company assembled for their first service on January 3, 1841, when Rev. Luther Wright, an aged and retired minister living in Woburn, preached and administered the communion.

¹ November 19, 1840.

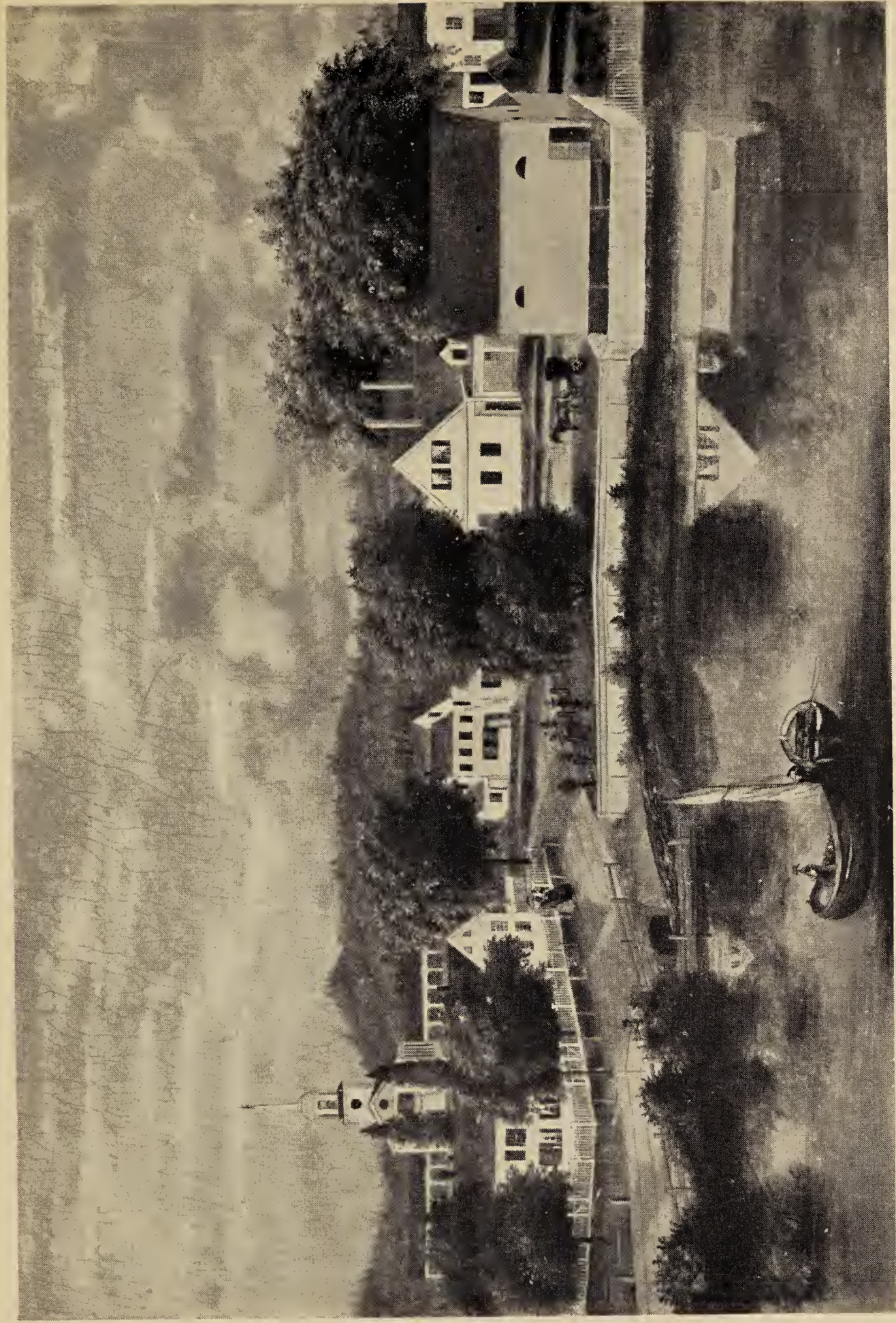
The church thus successfully set upon its hill was a simple, white painted New England meetinghouse, not without some grace of proportion and crowned by a belfry and a steeple.¹ It stood some fifty feet nearer to Church Street than the present edifice, and like that was in two stories, the vestry below and the auditorium above. According to the fashion of those days it had been financed by the sale of pews, which were "assessed" at values of from \$55 to \$220 according to their advantages of location. The list of the original pew holders is preserved.² There were forty-two of them and they paid in \$5,945. This amount was almost a thousand dollars more than the building was expected to cost, but a full thousand less than it actually did cost (\$6,973.22). The furnishings of the house were given by generous members of the new church: a pulpit by Harrison Parker, a vestry pulpit by the Cutter brothers, a chandelier by Mrs. Stephen Swan, a bell by "various individuals," bibles, a communion service, a clock, a carpet, and a double bass viol by societies or groups within the church.

The story of the bell is an interesting one. Thriftily in search of a bell that would not cost too much, the parish officers learned that one hung in the belfry of an abandoned church building in Waltham. It could be had at a very reasonable price, if the purchasers would take the responsibility of moving it from its perch. The task was not an easy one, for the building where it hung was dilapidated and none too safe. But Deacon N. B. Johnson, a mechanic of unusual ingenuity and resource, undertook to get it down, and assisted by Colonel S. B. White he put up the necessary rigging, lowered the bell safely to his big wagon drawn up beside the old church, and drove off with it in triumph.

The church building was flanked by two rows of horse sheds; the right to occupy the sheds was sold to certain parishioners. The shed furthest to the south was occupied by the town hearse. In the rear of the church toward Wedge Pond a churchyard or burying ground was laid out, the first cemetery to exist within the present bounds of Winchester. Hitherto all burials had been made in the old burying grounds at Woburn center, except for the few that were made in private tombs built by families who lived on Andrews

¹ Gardner Symmes was its architect and builder.

² See *Winchester Press*, Vol. I, No. 21.



WINCHESTER CENTER IN 1845



Hill — notably the Johnson, Locke and Carter-Bucknam families. The land for the churchyard was bought, like the church lot, from Thomas Collins; the deed was executed October 29, 1841. It is to be noticed that it did not run to the South Congregational Society but to the "Inhabitants of Woburn"; during its existence the responsibility for the care of this burial ground seems to have been confusingly divided between the parish and the town.

Even with the amount of labor that had been spent in levelling the hill, the burial ground was still considerably higher than the foundation of the church. From Church Street we are told the monument at the grave of Major Francis Johnson stood up so prominently that it seemed to rest on the top of the horse sheds. The churchyard contained fifty-one burial lots, forty-four of which had been sold when the yard was abandoned in 1854.

In 1843 the improvement of the church grounds was advanced by the planting of a number of elm trees along the three sides of the lot. These trees which thrived for many years, though some of them have lately had to be removed, were known as the "Deacon's Elms," but others besides the early deacons had a hand in planting them. To each of twenty leading members of the church was assigned the duty of supplying and caring for a young elm; it does not appear, however, that all did so. The trees that can be identified were those set out by Joseph Wyman, Loring Emerson, Marshall Wyman, Captain Jefferson Ford, Benjamin F. Thompson, Joseph B. Symmes, Putnam Emerson, N. B. Johnson, Peleg Lawrence, Stephen Swan, Thomas Hutchinson and Ebenezer Parker and Thomas Collins.¹ The first deacons of the church were only three in number — the same three who had held that office in the mother church — B. F. Thompson, Marshall Wyman and N. B. Johnson; it is obvious therefore that the dozen or more "Deacon's Elms" must, most of them, have been set in place by other and less reverent hands.

The first minister of the new church was Rev. George Phillips Smith, a recent graduate of Andover Seminary. He was eminently successful both as a preacher and a pastor, and the church flourished under his care; but having met with domestic bereavement, which

¹ See the map in article on the history of the church by Rev. George Cooke in *Winchester Record*, Vol. III, No. 1.

led him to wish for a change of scene, he accepted a call to the First Congregational Church in Worcester, and was accordingly dismissed January 21, 1845, to the deep regret of his flock. Mr. Smith lived but seven years after leaving Winchester.

He was succeeded by Rev. William T. Eustis, Jr., who was ordained — and also installed — on April 8, 1846. He remained with the church only two years, when he too accepted a call to a larger and wider field with the Chapel Street Church of New Haven.

Another young man, Rev. John M. Steele, followed Mr. Eustis. As in the case of the first two pastors, the Woburn South — soon to become the Winchester — Church was his first charge. Mr. Steele remained until 1852. He was a man of energy and enterprise, but he got on none too well with his people. He built for himself a large and imposing house on the hillside toward the Fells in what was then still woodland. The house stood till lately on the easterly side of Highland Avenue near Wolcott Terrace. He seems also to have engaged in certain imprudent real estate ventures, or at least they were so regarded by many of his parishioners; and though he had warm friends among the congregation his withdrawal seemed wise, and he resigned his pulpit February 11, 1852.¹

The further history of Winchester's first church will be resumed in the chapter devoted to the religious history of the town.

The question of separating South Woburn from the mother town and incorporating it as an independent municipality was already being quietly discussed as early as 1845. The village continued to thrive; by 1845 it must have numbered at least a thousand persons. In addition to those attracted by its industries, it was beginning to be sought out by residents of Boston who recognized the beauty of its surroundings and found the railroad a ready and speedy means of reaching it. Conspicuous among these early suburban residents was Frederick O. Prince, of an old and wealthy Boston family, who moved hither in the middle forties and built a handsome house overlooking Wedge Pond where Wedge Pond Road now runs. Mr. Prince was a man of ability and force of character. From his first arrival here he became one of the leading citizens of the town, as we shall have occasion to see. After his return to Bos-

¹ Winchester *Press*, Vol. I, No. 22, article by Rev. Leander Thompson.

ton he was as eminent in the larger city as in the rural village. He was mayor of Boston from 1877 to 1881, and a man influential in the counsels of the national Democracy.¹

Mr. Prince was the father of Dr. Morton Prince, the eminent neurologist, and of Frederick H. Prince, banker and railroad president. The latter was born in Winchester. His son — the grandson of F. O. Prince therefore — was Norman Prince, who was one of the first American boys to join the famous Lafayette Escadrille in the early days of the World War. He served with distinction in the squadron for a year and a half, and was killed in the crash of his plane October 15, 1916.

Another well-known Bostonian who lived in Winchester in the "early days" was Charles P. Curtis, Jr., whose house was on the southern shore of Wedge Pond near the foot of Curtis Street, which bears his name. It is the house, still standing, which was later known as the Firth house. Mr. Curtis was a lawyer of distinction, with his offices in Boston, and a relative of Benjamin R. Curtis, once Justice of the Supreme Court.

Still another newcomer to our town in the forties was Charles Kimball, a successful school-teacher in Boston, who proved to have a talent for political life and became at last sheriff of Middlesex County. He bought the house on Cambridge Street at the corner of the present Calumet Road, then owned by Loring Emerson. Mr. Emerson built himself another house on the opposite corner; it was later moved across the street and still stands at No. 130 Cambridge Street.

Other men whose residence in Winchester dates from this period were Charles Goddard, who first built on the slightly hillock where the house of the late D. N. Skillings stands, nearly opposite the Town Hall, Charles Pressey, H. K. Stanton,² Joseph Shattuck, Charles McIntire, John A. Bolles, a distinguished lawyer who was in later years Secretary of the Commonwealth,³ Zebediah Abbott, R. C. P. Freeman,⁴ A. H. Hayward and David Youngman.

None of these men had, of course, any sentimental attachment

¹ From 1860 to 1888 he was organizing secretary of eight national Democratic Conventions.

² Mr. Stanton used his initials only; his very remarkable name was Hatevil Killdevil Stanton. The Puritans themselves never devised a more singular one.

³ His house was on Dix Street, near the entrance to Glengarry.

⁴ His house was on the estate later owned by the late Edwin Ginn.

to the old town of Woburn, of which this community had for so many years been a part. This same thing was true by this time of more than half the population of the village. There were sound reasons too why a new town should be created; South Woburn was growing fast and promised to grow faster still. It was the center of a district that had an individuality of its own, but which, strangely enough, lay in three different towns. The Symmes Corner neighborhood was within the limits of Medford; the southern part of the West Side below Church Street, after two centuries as a part of the ancient town of Charlestown, was now attached to the new town of West Cambridge, later named Arlington. The boundary lines of the three towns met at or near the corner of Bacon and Church streets. It was desirable — highly desirable — that this region should have unity of development and government; but it could have that only if it was formed into a new town.

There was, moreover, a growing feeling of hostility between the town of Woburn and its expanding southern extremity. A variety of incidents contributed to this end. Perhaps the first one, in point of time, was the wrangle over the "Surplus Fund." This fund was Woburn's share of the ostentatious distribution of money from the national treasury which Andrew Jackson ordered when, for the first and last time in history, the Government found itself with no national debt and a surplus on hand. Massachusetts got its share from Washington and offered to divide it among the separate towns. In Woburn there was a long struggle over what should be done with the money; for several years following 1837 the town meetings were torn wide open by the issue. Conservative citizens wanted it spent to pay the expenses of the town, and so to reduce taxes; but a very strong party demanded that the money be distributed in equal shares among the voters.

The leader of this party was Jason Richardson, a strong-willed man who prided himself on being a friend of the people. He was for most of his life a resident of old Woburn but he comes momentarily into Winchester history, for it was he who built — and for a time occupied — the stone house on Forest Street now the residence of Mr. Gregory. Mr. Richardson was a teamster by occupation, and in the course of his travels about the country he collected the stones from which, when he had enough, he constructed the inter-

esting old house. He was a firebrand in the town meeting, and kindled blazes of loyalty and of enmity alike by his rough eloquence. South Woburn, always conservative in sentiment, was opposed to his proposal to distribute the surplus money among the voters; the brothers Cutter, Deacons Thompson and Johnson, and Samuel S. Richardson were among the most determined of his opponents. In the end they carried the day, not he; but the long struggle left them very suspicious of the "radical" tendencies among the Woburn electorate.¹

The secession of the South Woburn Church in 1840 caused some hard feelings, which were aggravated by a controversy between the two churches over the endowment fund which belonged to the Woburn church. This fund was considerable in amount, and it was, by act of legislature, confined to the uses of the old First Parish in Woburn. The members of the new church conceived, however, that, having been originally members of the Woburn Church, they had a moral claim on their proportionate part of the fund. At a meeting of the church in South Woburn April 11, 1842 Deacon Thompson and Loring Emerson were appointed to present this claim to the mother church. It was admitted that there was no legal ground for the request that the fund be divided, but a claim based on morality and justice, "stronger than human law," was asserted. The Woburn church, however, could not entertain that view of the case, and returned answer that it intended to retain the whole of the fund "to which by every principle of law it was entitled."

That this reply not only disappointed, but irritated, the South Woburn petitioners is apparent from the spirited tenor of the resolution they passed, spread upon their records, and forwarded to their brethren in Woburn:

"Resolved: that we believe the claim which we have presented to be a just one, which will stand before a tribunal more impartial than the one that has refused us; and that we believe our brethren of the parent society, when they are brought to act in accordance with the divine precepts 'to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things which are God's,' and 'all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even the

¹ *Woburn Journal*, May 24, 1888.

same to them,' will recognize our claim, and cheerfully grant it.'"¹ There the matter rested; but not, it is very likely, without some heartburnings.

In 1845 another incident added some fuel to the waxing blaze. The people of the village, tired of having no means of passing between Washington Street and the center, petitioned the county commissioners to lay out a public way to be called Pleasant Street, over the route we know today as lower Mt. Vernon Street. It was an improvement long needed, for vehicles coming down Washington Street could reach the center only by driving all the way up to its junction with Main Street and then turning sharply north; at least half a mile of unnecessary travel. Even foot passengers were exposed to the same inconvenience until Sumner Richardson, who lived where the Winchester Savings Bank now stands, thoughtfully built a rough footbridge across the Aberjona, which enabled them by using a path across the field to follow a short cut to the center.

For some reason, however, the selectmen of Woburn fought the plan; perhaps they did not want to spend the town's money for a new street in South Woburn. At all events they attended the hearing before the county commissioners, which was held in the little railway station, in a hostile mood, and Bartholomew Richardson, one of their number and a passionate, free-spoken man, became so abusive that one of the commissioners threatened him with a libel suit.² The petition was granted and the street built, but one more item had been added to the account of South Woburn against Woburn.

We have it on the authority of Nathaniel A. Richardson, who was deep in politics most of his life and at this very time Collector of Taxes for Woburn, that personal and partisan politics also entered into the picture. Woburn was a strongly Democratic town, but South Woburn was almost solidly Whig. Ambitious men from our end of the town found it hard to rise to local office; they relished the idea of a new town soundly Whig in politics, and the Whig members of the state legislature were of a mind to assist them in their plans. So when in 1848 the Whig party came into power in Massachusetts it seemed an auspicious moment to push forward the project for

¹ *Winchester Record*, Vol. III, page 52, article by Rev. George Cooke.

² N. A. Richardson's Scrapbook, article published in *Winchester Star*, March 1, 1901.

creating this new town out of the adjacent parts of Woburn, Medford and West Cambridge, which were tributary to the thriving village of South Woburn. The theory is plausible; politics figures in nearly everything in a democracy. By 1849 then, forwarded by all the influences we have named, the moment for incorporation was ripe for accomplishment. The moment was at hand. Winchester as an independent town was awaiting its birth.

CHAPTER XII

THE TOWN OF WINCHESTER IS BORN

“THE inhabitants of South Woburn and vicinity are hereby requested to meet at the Vestry of the Congregational Church on Monday Nov. 26th at 6½ o'clock P.M. to take into consideration the subject of petitioning the Legislature for an Act of Incorporation into a separate Town; or to do anything in relation to the same.

South Woburn Nov. 20, 1849.”

This notice, posted here and there about the village, was the first open step taken toward the incorporation of Winchester. But the ground had been carefully prepared through several months or perhaps a year of quiet neighborhood discussion and what would today be called propaganda. The meeting was largely attended; the sentiment was very strong in favor of the formation of a new town.¹ A petition had been previously drawn up, ready when signed, for presentation to the legislature. Within a few days there were 185 signatures, probably more than seventy per cent of the legal voters in the community. Ebenezer Parker's name led the list, John A. Bolles stood second, and B. F. Thompson, F. O. Prince, S. B. White, David Youngman, O. R. Clark, Sumner Richardson, Nathan B. Johnson and the Cutter brothers followed close behind. The meeting at the Congregationalist vestry chose Samuel S. Richardson, Oliver R. Clark and John A. Bolles a committee to present the petition to the legislature. In all these preliminary undertakings the petitioners leaned heavily on the advice and leadership of Mr. Bolles, who, though a recent accession to the community, was a lawyer of marked ability and one of the most enthusiastic advocates of incorporation. It was at his suggestion that the petitioners lost no time in securing counsel to represent them at the State House, and that they chose Albert H. Nelson, the leading lawyer in Woburn, to discharge that duty.

Mr. Nelson was a Whig, and so predisposed — if Mr. Richard-

¹ Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, pages 1-5.



COL. WILLIAM P. WINCHESTER



son's view of the political influences at work in the matter is correct — to favor the creation of the new town. He had been a state Senator, and was before many years to become Chief Justice of the Superior Court of the Commonwealth. He understood all the intricacies of legislative procedure, was well known and liked at the State House, and was capable of presenting the petitioners' case most forcibly. When he accepted a retainer of \$50, with \$200 to follow if the petition were granted, it was felt on all sides that the committee who engaged him had done a very shrewd stroke of business.

What was the new town to be called? It was necessary to find a name to insert in the petition to the legislature, but there was no agreement on the question. At a meeting held December 17, 1849 a trial ballot showed votes for Harmony, Linden, Alton, Winthrop, Wyoming, Mystic, Sheffield, South Woburn, Waterville and Columbus. On a second ballot South Woburn had six votes, Waterville thirty-three, and Columbus thirty-five. A change of only a few votes would have bestowed the high-sounding name of Columbus on the infant town.¹ But the question was not forced to a decision, and a committee consisting of Deacon Thompson, Mr. Bolles, Harrison Parker, Samuel B. White, S. S. Richardson, Francis H. Johnson, Josiah Hovey and Charles Pressey was named to submit a list of names to an adjourned meeting one week later.

At that meeting Deacon Thompson submitted a report which read:

"Since the appointment of your committee, circumstances have occurred (of a character which renders it improper to do more than allude to them) which induce us, instead of reporting a list of names, to recommend that a committee be chosen who shall be empowered to choose a name and insert it in the petition to the legislature. These circumstances are both personal and pecuniary, and promise to be of material importance to the welfare and convenience of the new town and its citizens."

What had happened during the week was that F. O. Prince had told the committee he felt sure that if the new town should be named Winchester, it might expect a handsome sum of money from Colonel William P. Winchester of Watertown, in recognition

¹ Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, page 6.

of the compliment paid to his family name. The meeting did not adopt the suggestion of its committee, as it stood; it voted that six names should be presented for consideration, but it significantly voted to add Mr. Prince to the committee.

After a brief deliberation the committee returned with these names: Appleton, Winthrop, Avon, Channing, Waterville and Winchester. There was no special fitness in any of these names except perhaps Waterville, and no strong sentiment in favor of any of them. Mr. Prince's words, which had by this time been repeated among the audience, contributed a stronger argument for the name of Winchester — in itself a melodious and attractive name — than could be advanced for any of the other five. The meeting voted to instruct the committee of three already appointed to present the petition to the legislature, to select a name from the six suggested and insert it in the petition. It was taken for granted that Winchester would be chosen, and so in due time it happened.¹

There has always been a spice of mystery about the circumstances attending the choice of this name for our town. Colonel Winchester was a successful merchant in Boston, a wealthy man for that time, highly respected and widely popular. He was for several years colonel of Boston's crack volunteer regiment, the Independent Corps of Cadets, whence his military title. He was hospitable in the extreme; he had built in Watertown a rather splendid mansion overlooking the Charles River, where he meant to entertain largely, and he owned a yacht, *The Northern Light*, on which he delighted to welcome his many friends.² Neither he nor his family, however, had any previous association with our town.

The probable explanation is that Mr. Prince, who was intimately acquainted with Colonel Winchester, feeling that Winchester would be a dignified and musical name for the proposed town, conceived the idea that the colonel might be delicately flattered by the selection of his family name, and that his generosity, on which it was pretty safe to count, might be invoked for the benefit of his namesake. Certain it is that Mr. Prince engineered

¹ Article in the *Winchester Record*, Vol. I, page 312. Many of the documents referred to are preserved in the collections of the Winchester Historical Society.

² This yacht was designed by a yacht builder of Danish birth, Louis Winde, who was in later years a resident of Winchester, and the father of Henry J. Winde, long one of the Cemetery Commissioners of the town.

the whole affair and is entitled to the credit of attaching so pleasing a name to our town.

It may be said here, perhaps a little prematurely, that upon the incorporation of the town Colonel Winchester addressed to the newly elected board of selectmen, this letter:

To Messrs. Nathan B. Johnson, Loring Emerson,
Charles McIntire, Selectmen of Winchester.

Gentlemen, I am informed that the name Winchester was given to your town at the request of its inhabitants, in compliment to me. No compliment could be more flattering, and I beg leave, through you, to return my cordial thanks therefor. But as I am not content with a mere verbal expression of the high honor conferred upon my family name, I beg leave to present to the town the enclosed sum of Three Thousand dollars, to be appropriated to the erection of a Town Hall or any other proper object of municipal expenditure.

With my best wishes for the lasting prosperity of the town of Winchester and its citizens,

Believe me, very truly,

Your obedient servant,
Wm. P. Winchester.

Boston, May 25, 1850.

It had been hoped to receive Colonel Winchester at the town meeting at which this letter was read. A violent rainstorm prevented him from attending, and a committee was appointed to invite him to visit the town on a later and fitting occasion, and to entertain him in a suitable manner while here. But he never enjoyed the hospitality of the town, for on August 6, 1850 he died untimely of a typhoid fever, aged only forty-nine years.¹

In following the train of events that grew out of the choice of a name for the embryo town we have got ahead of our story; we must return to December 1849. It must not be supposed that the community of "South Woburn and its vicinity" was unanimously

¹ On December 27, 1900, Colonel Winchester's son, Mr. Thomas B. Winchester, presented to the town a portrait in oil of his father, which is now hung in the Public Library. He also gave the town a massive solid silver punch bowl lined with gold, which had been presented to Colonel Winchester by Boston friends in memory of "the pleasant hours passed with him on board his yacht *Northern Light*." This handsome bowl is preserved in the rooms of the Winchester Historical Society in the Public Library.

in favor of creating a new town. There was strong opposition by a minority, and the minority included most of the families on Indian or Andrews Hill and along Cambridge Street in the western part of the town. This section was separated by a considerable distance from the center and maintained its attachment to the old town of Woburn. Dana Fay, who lived on Cambridge Street, not far within the proposed boundaries of Winchester, was the active leader of this minority. He drew up and circulated a petition protesting against the division of Woburn, and obtained no less than fifty-one signatures. These included those of the Lockes and Johnsons and other families living on the Hill and of several Richardsons, Hadleys and others who lived at the extremity of the new town toward the northeast. It was indeed mostly signed by what Mr. Bolles called "border men," who had not yet felt the gravitational pull of the growing village at Winchester center.

The advocates of incorporation were none the less anxious to conciliate this opposition, and went to some pains to win Mr. Fay over,¹ not, as it appears, with much success. In the meantime the legislature had assembled, the petition of the inhabitants of South Woburn who wished to be set off as a separate town of Winchester had been received, and referred to the Committee on Towns, and notice of that fact had been served on the Town Clerks of Woburn, Medford and West Cambridge. A town meeting was accordingly summoned to meet in Woburn on February 7, 1850 to see what action the town would take regarding the petition. The South Woburn voters were present almost in a body. They understood that most of the leading men of old Woburn resented the petition, and were firmly opposed to the division of the town, but they counted on their own numbers and enthusiasm, on the arguments which their spokesmen Deacon Thompson, Mr. Bolles and Mr. O. R. Clark were prepared to present and on the good will of many Woburn folk to commit the town to a peaceful consent to the separation. At first it seemed that their hopes were to be justified. After a full and free discussion, in which both sides were amply presented, Mr. Clark's motion that "the town is willing the prayer of the petitioners be granted" and that the terms of separation, which must be just and equitable, should be agreed on by a com-

¹ See letter to Mr. Fay printed in *Winchester Record*, Vol. I, page 197.

mittee of six, three from each part of the town, was passed by a satisfactory majority. A committee of five was named to select the committee provided for in Mr. Clark's resolution and went into executive session.

At this moment the time arrived for the departure of the last train for South Woburn (for by 1850 the branch railroad line to Woburn had been built and was in operation). The South Woburn voters, or most of them, thinking their point gained, and not relishing the idea of a two mile walk home if the train were missed, rushed for the station. Their departure suggested to the Woburn strategists the possibility of upsetting the decision that the meeting had reached. Mr. Horace Conn, a leather manufacturer and a leading man in Woburn, moved that a committee be raised to attend on the legislature and oppose the petition tooth and nail. Ruled out of order until the committee had reported, his motion nevertheless threw the meeting into great disorder. Disputes over parliamentary procedure, recriminations, and angry personal differences kept the hall in an uproar. In the end Mr. Conn made, and succeeded in carrying, a motion to reconsider the vote by which the prayer of the petitioners was approved, and the meeting hastily dissolved.

At a later meeting, which the South Woburn voters, angry at being overreached, did not attend,¹ the town of Woburn voted to fight the petition and to engage counsel to appear before the legislature. Mr. John C. Park was accordingly chosen for this duty, and to him was subsequently added Mr. B. F. Hallett, a Woburn lawyer of note, who was, according to Mr. O. R. Clark, a "wheel-horse of the Massachusetts Democracy."² The note of partisan politics is again struck.

In the meantime the legislative mill was grinding steadily along. The Committee on Towns, to which Winchester's petition had been referred, came out from Boston to view the scene, and the members were impressed with the reasonableness of the desire of the inhabitants of the new center of population for a separate municipal existence. Hearings before the committee began in

¹ The conduct of the first meeting was "alike disorderly and dishonorable," says the *Winchester Town Record*, Vol. I, page 17, in an entry made probably by Mr. Bolles.

² *Winchester Record*, Vol. I, page 324.

February; several were held in order that the matter might be freely discussed. Woburn was the only one of the three towns affected to offer determined opposition to the petition for incorporation;¹ but the committee was served with a remonstrance signed by the selectmen of Medford and ninety-three citizens of the town, and with another signed by eighty-nine "inhabitants" of West Cambridge. Besides these there was the petition of remonstrance already referred to, presented by fifty-four residents of the proposed town led by Dana Fay, and another bearing the names of nine men — among whom were Deacon John and Marshall Symmes and John H. Bacon — praying, as citizens of Medford, that they be not included in the new town.

The Committee on Towns was, however, from the first friendly to the ambitions of Winchester. Its chairman, Stephen M. Gifford of Duxbury,² was openly in favor of incorporating the new town. Whether or not it was a coincidence that Mr. Gifford and a majority of his colleagues were Whigs, and that Whigs were most active in promoting the incorporation, is a question that it is not now easy to answer; Mr. N. A. Richardson who was in the thick of things was sure that it was no mere coincidence, and very likely he was right.³ At all events, Mr. Gifford's services were so highly appreciated by the people of the new town that they attached his name in gratitude to one of the first of the new schools they built; there was a Gifford School in Winchester until very recent years.

The cause of the new town did not suffer at the hearings. Its counsel, Mr. Nelson and Mr. John A. Bolles, were superior in tact and ability to Mr. Hallett, who represented Woburn, and their presentation of the case for Winchester was admitted to be very effective. In the end the committee reported a bill incorporating the town, according to the prayer of the petitioners. The bounds fixed by the bill were those which exist today, except in one particular. Originally the greater part of Horn Pond Mountain was included in Winchester; but in 1873 enough was reannexed to Woburn to give that city effective control of a high-pressure reser-

¹ Sanford B. Perry was entered as counsel for Medford, but he appears to have made no argument.

² Later for many years Clerk of the Senate.

³ "There was probably never a case in which there was such constant earnest and wholesale lobbying." Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, page 21.

voir it had constructed on the summit of the mountain. This recession of territory to Woburn is indicated by the acute-angled break in the northern boundary line of Winchester, shown upon the map of the town.

The bill of incorporation had to face opposition on the floor of both House and Senate, but it passed by good majorities. On April 30, 1850 the Governor of the Commonwealth, George N. Briggs, set his name at the foot of the parchment, and Winchester achieved not individuality, for that it had long possessed, but independent corporate existence.¹

No time was lost in organizing the town. Within twenty-four hours of the moment when Governor Briggs signed the bill of incorporation, a warrant signed by John A. Bolles, a Justice of the Peace, was issued, calling a meeting of the citizens of the town for the seventh of May. This meeting, the first town meeting in Winchester, was held at one o'clock in the afternoon in the vestry of the Congregational Church, the most commodious hall then available in the village. The meeting was devoted to the election of town officers. Deacon B. F. Thompson and Samuel M. Rice were nominated for Moderator, and Mr. Rice was elected by 80 votes to 69. For selectmen the meeting chose Deacon Nathan B. Johnson, Loring Emerson and Deacon John Symmes, all old residents in the community and men highly respected both for character and for sound sense. Deacon Symmes, who had never been sympathetic with the proposal to take him and his property out of Medford and plant them in the new town of Winchester, declined to serve; his place on the board was filled by Charles McIntire, a somewhat recent comer. "Why he was chosen or who were his backers" was to a contemporary observer something of a mystery.² But he was a brisk, stirring man oftener engaged in speculation than in sound business, of pleasant manners and plausible speech, public spirited, but after a visionary, grandiloquent fashion that often brought him into differences with his harder-headed colleagues. At this time and for some years afterward he owned and occupied the old Black Horse Tavern building, the grounds of

¹ Somewhat fuller accounts of the events here summarized can be found in the *Winchester Record*, Vol. I, pages 312-332.

² N. A. Richardson in *Winchester Star*, December 3, 1902, article on the first selectmen of Winchester.

which he beautified with gardens and hedges at considerable expense. In later life he was unfortunate; his financial schemes went awry, and his shining dreams faded.

The first Town Clerk elected was Dr. David Youngman. He, too, was one of the more recent citizens of the town, but a loyal and useful one. He was a man of good education, and held a medical degree from Dartmouth College, but at this time he found business more profitable than practice. A few years before 1850 he had opened the first apothecary shop in Winchester. It was at first located in the basement of a house on Main Street near the Converse Bridge. In 1848 Dr. Youngman moved to the building recently built by S. S. Richardson just north of the railway tracks, and occupied in part by Sanderson and Taylor's store.¹ Still later he established his shop in the Lyceum Building. He was a book-seller and stationer as well as a dispenser of drugs. Dr. Youngman was popular and intelligent; his command of sound English was of considerable value to the early selectmen when official papers were to be drawn. He could sing as well as he could write, and he was not only a pillar of the Congregational choir but a teacher of music as well, for he conducted a singing school on winter evenings in the vestry of the church. In 1856 the doctor sold his business in Winchester to Josiah Hovey and removed to Boston where he practised his profession for more than thirty years.²

It was in the house occupied by Dr. Youngman, which stood on Dix Street near the Congregational Church, that the first child was born in the town of Winchester. The parents, Mr. and Mrs. William A. Coburn, lodged with Dr. Youngman. The child was a boy. Dr. Chapin, who attended the birth, suggested to the father that it be named William Winchester Coburn. Mr. Coburn was not impressed with the idea, but a few years later the grandfather of the boy — the father having died — appeared before the Town Clerk and asked that Dr. Chapin's suggestion be carried out. The name was accordingly changed upon the Clerk's book, and William Winchester Coburn heads the continually lengthening roll of the native sons and daughters of Winchester.

¹ See page 143.

² Dr. Youngman taught the village school for one term. According to "O. S. B." in the *Winchester Star*, August 31, 1900, "his hair was red, his temper hot," and he preferred the use of a rawhide whip on refractory pupils instead of more humane correctives."



TWO OF THE FIRST SELECTMEN
NATHAN B. JOHNSON CHARLES MCINTIRE



Colonel Samuel B. White was chosen Treasurer of the town, Cyrus Bancroft, Ezekiel Johnson and Gardner Symmes assessors, Marshall Wyman, Zacheriah Richardson, Stephen Cutter and Marshall Symmes assistant assessors (seven assessors seem plenty for a town still so small), and Rev. John M. Steele, Frederick O. Prince and Charles Goddard were elected to the School Committee, whose important task it was to organize a complete school system for the town. The town was likewise supplied with the numerous apparatus of government common in New England towns of that day, represented by Constables, Tithing-men, Fence-viewers, Measurers of Wood and Bark, Field Drivers, Highway Surveyors, Surveyors of Lumber, Sealers of Weights and of Leather and a Public Undertaker. One misses only the Hog-Reeve out of the list.

A committee, headed by Oliver R. Clark, was also chosen to determine the number and location of the new schools which the town must build, and it is significant of the seriousness with which this matter of education was regarded that the committee recommended and the town voted to build four new schoolhouses at once in addition to the two already standing.¹

The new town entered upon its existence debtless, for the expenses attendant on incorporation, amounting to some \$500, had been met by subscription among the citizens who signed the original petition; but on the other hand it was faced with an empty treasury. It had a tax list, inherited from Woburn, amounting to some \$3,000 — signifying a property valuation of about \$400,000 — but it would be some months before taxes could be expected to materialize. A considerable sum of money was no doubt due to Winchester from Woburn in settlement of Winchester's share in the public property — land, buildings and money — of the old town before its division. But that must await the slow process of assessment and mutual agreement. The town had therefore to borrow \$1,400 at once, and its officers had to follow the policy of rigid economy for the first year. It was voted to "farm out" the collection of the taxes, instead of electing a Town Collector. The practice was an old one in New England towns; it was followed in Winchester until 1857, when the offices of Town Treasurer and

¹ The history of the schools in Winchester is reserved for a separate chapter, Chapter XVI.

Collector of Taxes were united. In accordance with it, bids were received for the privilege of collecting the tax money. Samuel Kendall agreed to undertake the job for $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of what he took in, and became the first Collector of Winchester.¹ His remuneration was modest. He must have got less than forty dollars for all the time and trouble and expense to which he was put; yet the next year Samuel S. Richardson underbid him and took the office for only one per cent of the total sum collected. He was succeeded after only one year by James Bridge, and he after the same interval by Nathaniel A. Richardson. None of these "farmers of the revenue" seem to have found the speculation sufficiently profitable to desire it a second time.

By December 3 the committee appointed to settle with Woburn for the public property jointly owned on the day of incorporation was ready to report to the town.² By the arrangement that had been reached, each town was to have title to the public property within its present limits; in the case of Winchester that meant only a schoolhouse or two, half ownership in the burial ground behind the Congregational Church, and a small building on Vine Street in which for several years a "hand-tub" fire engine had been stationed. To the engine itself Woburn laid claim, and it was necessary for Winchester to purchase another similar piece of apparatus, which it presently did. The committee found that the value of the public property of old Woburn was \$14,532.36, offset in part by debts of the town to the amount of \$8,725.03. That left a balance of \$5,807.33 of which Winchester's share was \$1,370. That sum, therefore, was paid into the treasury by the town of Woburn, and the last formality connected with the division of the old town was completed.

The first financial statement of Winchester, made at the town meeting of 1851, is worth quoting, if only for comparison with the cost of government today. The town received in taxes \$2,550 out of a total of \$3,001 committed to the Collector. It had the \$1,370 paid in by Woburn. It had borrowed \$1,400, mostly in sums of \$200 or \$300 loaned to it by private citizens. That was all its revenue. It had spent \$4,116.63, of which \$1,253.29 was for maintaining the schools of the town and \$1,030 for the land and building

¹ Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, page 44.

² Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, page 64.

of a little schoolhouse on the hill near the corner of High and Ridge streets, and the land for a schoolhouse in the Rumford district beyond Cutter Village. No money at all was laid out on roads. The principal items of the "incidentals" that made up the total of \$4,116.63 were the support of the poor, \$112; salaries of town officers, \$611.50; expenses of buildings for schoolhouses, \$510.91, and the purchase of and repairing a hearse, \$188.¹ Thus simply and economically was instituted the government of a town which, with its population increased by ten fold, had in 1933 a revenue and an expenditure of considerably more than a million dollars.

The steady growth of the village is clearly indicated by the rapidity with which its taxable property increased. In 1850, as I have just remarked, the tax list committed to the Collector amounted to one dollar over \$3,000. By 1852 it had more than doubled, and the expenses of the town had grown to \$11,819.52; in 1856 the taxes committed had risen to \$10,132 and by 1861 to \$13,643. During most of this time expenses exceeded revenue, as was to be expected in a new town, with the essential equipment of local government to be created. We find the town borrowing considerable sums, once \$6,000 from the State of Massachusetts, again sums of from \$1,000 to \$4,000 from banks in Lowell or Charlestown, and often giving its notes to its own citizens. Charles Kimball, for instance, advanced \$600 on June 15, 1852 and \$500 more six months later; Samuel B. White, Jr. lent the town \$200 on June 8, 1852, and Josiah Locke lent it \$900 on August 18. In 1853 S. B. White took the town's note for \$400, Horatio Symmes lent it \$500 and Lydia W. Symmes \$600.² And so on. By 1860 Winchester had a debt of \$14,000, minute as it seems to us, but sufficiently large in the view of the citizens to urge them to plead in town meeting for even greater prudence and thrift in the matter of expenditures.

At the meeting of August 19, 1850, at which resolutions of sympathy were adopted and sent to the widow of Colonel Winchester, lately dead, the town took up the matter of school building seriously, and voted to appropriate \$4,000 to erect four new buildings, one on Andrews Hill (just referred to), one on the West Side near Marshall Wyman's on Cambridge Street, one on the East Side

¹ The hearse was kept in the most southerly of the horse sheds behind the Congregational Church, to which a door had been fitted.

² Annual reports of Winchester for 1853 and 1854.

on Cross Street near Washington Street, and one in the "Rumford" district near Caleb Richardson's house on Main Street.¹

On November 11, at the annual state election, Frederick O. Prince was elected the first representative of Winchester to the legislature. Mr. Prince was reëlected in 1851, and he was succeeded in 1852 by Zachariah Richardson. At this same meeting a committee was chosen to report on the advisability of building a town hall. Within a month this committee reported that if such a building were erected it should include accommodations for a high school; a structure seventy-four by forty-six feet would be large enough, said the committee, and it could be built for \$5,000 exclusive of the cost of the land. This sum, modest as it appears, was considerably more than the Colonel Winchester gift of \$3,000, which many citizens had thought might be used in building a town hall. The matter was, by the meeting, referred to a new committee, of which Henry Cutter was chairman.

This committee went diligently to work; by December 18, 1850 it was ready to report to an adjourned town meeting in favor of a piece of land on what is now Dix Street opposite the present location of the Calumet Club. It could be bought for \$2,200, said the committee. But the expenditure of this sum, with \$5,000 additional for a building, frightened the voters, already committed to spending on schoolhouses a lot more money than there was in sight. Moreover, preparations were then being made by certain citizens to put up a fine large business building at the corner of Main and Pleasant streets — the long-familiar Lyceum Building — and it was to contain a public hall large enough to accommodate town meetings for some years to come. Taking all these considerations into account, the town meeting voted in the laconic language of the Clerk's report "not to build."² Winchester was to wait almost forty years for its town hall.

Good use was, however, presently found for the \$3,000 in the Winchester Fund, a use which, as Mr. Prince thriftily pointed out, would not exhaust the fund but employ it as a public loan, to be in time returned to the treasury. This was the purchase of land for a cemetery, and the preparation of it for that purpose. A cemetery

¹ Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, page 49.

² Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, page 73.

was sure to be urgently needed, and almost at once. The yard behind the Congregational Church, owned partly by the church and partly by the town, was small and could not be much enlarged. If a proper piece of land was secured, enough money could soon be raised by the sale of lots therein to restore the money taken from the Winchester Fund. So it was argued and so it seemed good to the town, which voted on September 15, 1851 to use the Winchester money for that purpose.¹ The land had already been selected; out of half a dozen pieces offered to the town, a committee of ten, headed by John A. Bolles, had chosen a lot of ten acres owned by Gardner Symmes on the gravelly hill then covered with a low growth of pine, "over against Wedge Pond."² This was the nucleus of the beautiful Wildwood Cemetery of which Winchester has so much reason to be proud.

The site was an admirable one. It was quiet and retired; not only was the soil well adapted to the purpose designed, but the land, with the wide prospect it commands, its diversified surface and its frequent changes of level, has lent itself perfectly to the well-considered plans of planting and landscaping which have made Wildwood so peaceful and beautiful a city of the dead. The town is to be congratulated on the wisdom and good taste of those who placed it where it is.

By the summer of 1852 the new cemetery was ready for occupancy. A lot plan had been prepared, paths and roadways built, and a street constructed from Church Street to the cemetery gates.³

The cemetery was duly consecrated on September 15, 1852. The exercises included prayers by Rev. Mr. Robinson of the Congregational Church, and Rev. N. A. Reed, the minister of the Baptist Church, an address by Rev. Dr. Rollin H. Neale, a Baptist clergyman of Boston, and original hymns by Francis A. Durivage and Mrs. H. J. Lewis.

In 1853, arrangements having been made with the First Parish church and the owners of lots in the old burying ground behind that church, the bodies there interred were removed to Wildwood, where they now lie side by side with those of the generations that have succeeded them.

¹ Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, page 106.

² Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, page 92.

³ Now lower Wildwood and Willow streets. It was a "private way," not accepted as a public street until 1864.

CHAPTER XIII

THE EARLY YEARS OF THE TOWN FIRE AND FLOOD. SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY LIFE

An excellent idea of the dimensions of the Winchester of the 1850s and of the extent of its development can be had from the accompanying map of the village, made in 1854 by H. F. Walling, with the financial guarantee of the town. Of all the streets laid down upon the map only Main, Washington, Forest, Cross, Pleasant, Pond, Church, Bacon, Grove, Cambridge, High and Fruit streets (the latter now Hutchinson Road) were accepted town ways when incorporation occurred. The others, which a glance at the map will identify, though several of them passed then under names now unfamiliar or else had no names at all, were private roads built by citizens to develop their property, which had been cut up into building lots as the need for houses arose. Many of them, particularly on the slope of the hillside east of Main and Washington streets, began as wood roads or cart paths, made by the original owners of the farms along those two main roads, in order to reach their woodlots or pasture lots on the hill. As late as 1860 for example, Herrick Street was such a rough cart path, leading up through the hardwood growth to the edge of the Middlesex Fells.¹

These simple streets of the fifties, sixties and seventies of the last century were laid out, graded and roughly surfaced by private citizens who had land to sell to would-be householders. They have been taken over, one by one, by the town — when improved to a certain standard — and maintained as public “town ways.” In the first years, when macadam was unknown and surface drainage unheard of, it was a simple matter to construct a passable roadway at moderate cost. When Wildwood Street was put through from the Cemetery Road to the junction with Cambridge Street in 1852, the property owners were glad enough to build the whole street, fully

¹ MSS. of Henry C. Robinson.



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¹ MSS. of Henry C. Robinson.



THE TOWN OF WINCHESTER IN 1854.



half a mile in length. The town did not officially "accept" it as a town way until 1870.

Highland Avenue was in some sort an exception, at least as far as its southern end was concerned. It began like the others in a succession of little private ways which were united into a street that ran from Mt. Vernon to Forest Street as early as 1874. The extension from Mt. Vernon to Main Street was in 1897 laid out by the County Commissioners, in order to complete the through way from the county road from Medford to the Stoneham road.

An aged native of Winchester,¹ who well remembers the streets of this period, says of them, "They were topped with unscreened gravel taken from a convenient pit, drawn in tip-carts to the location under repair, and leveled with shovels. It was the intention to remove at the pit all stones beyond a certain size, but a good many, much too large to be driven over with comfort, found their way on to the street surface. The newly spread gravel was not rolled; the passing traffic was expected to smooth the surface. All vehicles used the middle of the streets, and created ruts sometimes several inches deep.

"The gravel was soon ground into a fine dust; in dry weather, when the wind blew or a vehicle passed, a cloud of dust arose and filled the air. . . . After a rain the dust turned to mud and it was hard to cross a street without getting one's footwear plastered with it."

Almost every house in the village was surrounded by the neat picket fence of our daddies; both fence and house were usually painted white. As time went on, the more well-to-do residents manifested their solvency by erecting fences of ornamental iron-work supported at regular intervals by blocks or posts of granite. Behind these fences the grass grew luxuriantly in the door yards; it was before the invention of lawn mowers. Sometimes a householder would mow his grass at haying time in order to make use of the same for the sustenance of the family horse or cow. Others never disturbed the growth from spring to fall. The fences therefore were not only a conventionally proper means of asserting a reasonable privacy for the families that dwelt behind them. They served the useful purpose of keeping wandering animals out of the tempting patches of grass. Swine no longer ran at large in the streets as they

¹ Mr. Henry C. Robinson.

had not so many years before, but there was some laxity about keeping horses and cows strictly tethered. Moreover flocks of sheep and bunches of cattle frequently passed over the main roads on their way to or from the stockyards and livestock markets of Somerville or Brighton. It was highly desirable to keep these animals out of dooryards along the way, and sometimes pedestrians crowded off the street by the advancing herd had to dodge hastily through a gate into the safe refuge which these fences offered.¹



THE CHURCH STREET ELM

A conspicuous object in the center was the old elm, which stood squarely in the middle of Pleasant Street where it entered Main Street. This tree, said to be an offspring of the famous old Converse elm, was a splendid specimen nearly a hundred years old; it was so affectionately regarded in Winchester that no one would hear of its being cut down when Pleasant Street was laid out in 1845, and it remained standing, an object of beauty though an obstacle to traffic, for some fifty years thereafter. A large stone watering trough for horses stood just in front of it; that too was removed when the tree was at last cut down.

Winchester has always been tender to its fine old trees. Another handsome elm long occupied the very middle of Church Street just south of the corner of Common Street. When Church Street was Driver's Lane this tree had grown up along the edge of the road; and when it became necessary to widen the street in order to accommodate the traffic, the town authorities, loath to sacrifice the old elm, ran the street around it and left it standing majestically in the middle of the roadway. The advent of automobiles made the tree a source of considerable danger, but the suggestion of doing away with it made by the selectmen, first in 1915, again in 1918 and again

¹ Henry C. Robinson MSS. recollections.

in 1923, brought forth a storm of protests from the citizens which on both occasions saved the old elm from destruction. The *Winchester Star* bristled with letters from tree lovers who could not bear the idea of parting with so lovely an ornament to the town, and public meetings, well attended, convinced the selectmen that the sentiment of Winchester was strongly against their proposal.¹ The controversy made the old tree "the most famous elm in the State," but repeated accidents due to its presence in the very middle of a much-travelled highway at last effected a change in public feeling. Early in May 1928, the axe was, by the selectmen's order, laid at the root of the old elm, and Winchester, with real regret, but without audible protest, saw it disappear.

I have already referred in passing to Lyceum Hall. This hall was built in 1851 on the spot where it still stands today, at the corner of Main and Mt. Vernon streets, albeit somewhat changed by alterations from its original appearance. Sumner Richardson was the builder. The owners, who supplied the money,



OLD LYCEUM HALL

were a number of gentlemen — Charles McIntire, John A. Bolles, H. K. Stanton, Asa Locke and Josiah Hovey among them — who thought the new town deserved a public hall and office building of some pretensions, and destined the hall primarily for the meetings of a local lyceum, of the sort so widely popular in New England in those years. The building was completed by the end of 1851. It was dedicated on January 7, 1852, when Mr. Bolles made some remarks suitable to the occasion, and was followed by Ex-Governor Briggs who delivered an address, we are told, on the subject of education.²

The building, Mr. Bolles assured his hearers, was in the Gothic style, meaning in this case no more than that the window frames

¹ *Winchester Star*, October 8 and 15, 1915, April 23, May 6, 1918, October 13, 1922, May 11, September 28, 1923.

² *Woburn Journal*, January 17, 1852.

were not square but pointed. It was raised from the ground more than at present, with a high basement in which was space for several shops. A wide platform ran along the front; behind it were two stores and a hall, forty-eight by twenty-seven feet, which could be divided into two rooms by folding doors. On the floor above there was the main hall, which could seat four hundred and fifty persons, and four office rooms. On the top floor there were office or committee rooms and a third hall of considerable size. The town was thus suddenly supplied with a quantity of room for public purposes that must have seemed magnificent to a community that had hitherto had no meeting place except the Congregational vestry.

Mr. Bolles in his address dilated upon the decorations of the hall, including the windows of diamond panes of colored glass, the painting of the walls in "dry fresco, or distemper" and the ornamentation of the ceiling, "worthy by itself of an evening's lecture," in "Arabesque or Moresco designs." Winchester seems to have plumed itself a good deal on its fine new hall; it awakened the admiration and envy of our neighbor, Woburn, for it made, as the *Woburn Journal* admitted, the public building in that town "look sorry indeed!"

Into this building several merchants promptly removed their stores — among them H. K. Stanton who was long in business in one of the basement shops as a grocer and dealer in "West India goods," and David Youngman, Town Clerk and apothecary. Dr. Youngman brought with him the collection of books belonging to the Winchester Library Association, which was already established in his old store across the tracks in S. S. Richardson's building.

The Association, the germ of our present Public Library, was founded March 20, 1848 as the South Woburn Library Association. A number of leading citizens were its originators — Deacon B. F. Thompson, John A. Bolles, Charles Kimball, Oliver R. Clark, Charles Pressey and others. Shares in the Association were sold for three dollars each, and each shareholder was assessed for annual dues of one dollar. Anyone not a shareholder could take out books by paying a dollar a year; the value of the shares, therefore, seems to have lain chiefly in the consciousness they gave of having supported a worthy public undertaking.

From the first Dr. Youngman was the librarian, and the

modest collection of books was housed at the back of his shop. There it remained, under the care of himself or Josiah Hovey, his successor in business (except for a brief return to its original house in the little store in the Richardson building, which had become Miss Hannah Lane's millinery shop) until 1859. In that year, having attained to the dignity of some eleven hundred volumes, it was offered by the Association to the town to form the nucleus of a public library, and duly accepted.¹

The Winchester lyceum, which occupied the larger hall in the new building with its public lectures and entertainments, for a number of years, had a certain amount of interesting history. The decade between 1850 and 1860 marked the heyday of that celebrated American institution, the lyceum. Literary and scientific men of mark were in wide demand for the lectures arranged by town and village lyceums, and found in them the source of much of their livelihood. The Winchester lyceum offered to its public some of the best of these popular speakers. Among those who spoke in Lyceum Hall are found the names of Governor George P. Boutwell (who inaugurated the first season on January 12, 1851 with a lecture on "Inventions"), E. P. Whipple, Wendell Phillips, B. P. Shillaber (Mrs. Partington), Rev. Horace Bushnell, Thomas Starr King, Rev. D. C. Eddy, and Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Dr. Holmes's lecture, delivered December 5, 1859, was the occasion of a rather heated controversy, which agitated not only Winchester but other parts of the Commonwealth as well. His subject was "The Chief End of Man," and the matter of his discourse gave some offense to those of the evangelical religious denominations in the community, for it disputed the dictum of the Westminster Confession that "the chief end of man was to glorify God." The controversy in question actually began a year before the lecture was delivered in Winchester. Dr. Holmes had been advertised to speak in the previous course of lectures, but he was unable to fill his engagement. The well-known church paper, the *Congregationalist*, heard — and so declared — that a delegation from the Winchester Literary Association had visited him to request him not to deliver that particular lecture in their town; that Dr. Holmes

¹ The collection taken over by the town contained also the books of the Winchester Agricultural Library Association, formed in 1856, but very shortly merged with the older Association.

had replied "It will be that or nothing," and that the Winchester delegation had retorted "Then it will be nothing," and cancelled his engagement.¹

This report was denied by the Literary Association,² which asserted that the only reason Dr. Holmes had not appeared was that other engagements prevented him from coming to Winchester when he was expected; the difference on this question of fact stirred up much literary activity among those who like to write letters to the newspapers, and no little was heard of it in those forums of public opinion during that winter. In the December following Dr. Holmes did appear in Lyceum Hall and gave the lecture. As might have been expected, the controversy flared up anew, and the newspaper columns again glowed with heated discussions concerning the propriety or impropriety of his views. One party described it as an "able, interesting and profitable lecture" and congratulated the doctor on his "fair, candid and liberal spirit."³ The other said the address was listened to with "impatience and indignation," and spoke severely of its "sneers and gibes, its disingenuous witticisms, its unsound reasoning," and its generally offensive character.⁴ It was a tempest of some local violence while it lasted, for religious feeling ran high in that day, when the emotions of the great revival of 1858 were still deeply felt.

The Winchester Literary Association, which conducted the lyceum, was accustomed also to give an annual "exhibition" of its own at which local talent occupied the stage. Several programmes are still in existence. They specify music by an orchestra, several vocal selections, solos, duets or quartettes, a number of patriotic or dramatic or humorous recitations and now and then a "dialogue" or "farce." The tickets were twenty-five—occasionally fifteen—cents, a reasonable charge surely; but the six lectures of the regular lyceum season could be heard for a course ticket costing only a dollar!

Such an entertainment was advertised for March 25, 1858, but two days before that date posters were displayed about the village announcing the postponement of the affair, since the com-

¹ *The Congregationalist*, January 1859.

² *Middlesex Journal*, January 1, 1860.

³ *Middlesex Journal*, December 9, 1859.

⁴ *Middlesex Journal*, December 31, 1859.



FREDERICK O. PRINCE



mittee considered "that the Salvation of an Immortal Soul is of far more importance than literary excellence."¹ The explanation of this rather mystifying announcement lies in the great religious revival of which I just spoke. It was in full swing in the spring of 1858. The Congregational and Baptist churches were holding protracted meetings almost every night in the week, and scores were undergoing conversion. The power of the movement is shown by the fact that on July 4, 110 new members were received into the Congregational Church; 98 of them were the fruit of the revival services. It was, the Literary Association felt, no time for the relative frivolity of an "exhibition" while matters of such spiritual importance were toward.

The lyceum lectures, interrupted in war time, were abandoned altogether as an annual institution about 1870, but the hall was none the less in frequent use for lectures, dances and entertainments until the building of the town hall in 1887; it was also the scene of the town meetings for no less than thirty-five years.

Some mention ought to be made — and this is perhaps an appropriate place — of the activities of the temperance folk of Winchester during these years. Following a period at the beginning of the century when tippling was quite general and the evils of liquor drinking clearly apparent, there arose in the thirties a strong movement not only in behalf of temperance but of absolute prohibition. Hardly a town or village in New England was without its temperance society, and the tide of public feeling grew so powerful as to lead to the enactment of the famous "Maine law" in 1851, and a similar, though less stringent, prohibitory law in Massachusetts in 1855.

There was a temperance society in Woburn as early as 1828, and South Woburn men were active in it. In 1833 Deacon Nathan B. Johnson was its president and Deacon B. F. Thompson its treasurer, while Loring Emerson, Zachariah Richardson and Ezekiel Johnson — all from our part of the town — were of its board of directors.

There was a chapter of the Sons of Temperance in South Woburn (later Winchester) from 1847 to 1855, and there is also record of a Town Temperance Society founded November 21, 1851,

¹ These posters are preserved in the collection of the Winchester Historical Society.

of which Dr. Chapin and Mr. J. A. Bolles, among others, were leaders. In 1858 another chapter of the Sons of Temperance was formed and led an active social as well as reforming existence for three years. It seems to have been discouraged by the refusal of the First Parish to let it use one of its vestry rooms for its meetings. The church fathers, we gather, thought it too social and not sufficiently serious-minded. While it lasted it afforded much simple, agreeable entertainment for its members. There remains record of one evening when, with facetious gravity, a pen and scissors were presented to Mr. E. A. Wadleigh, who was the editor of the *Evening Star*, to which occasional journal the Sons contributed their literary efforts, good, bad and indifferent.¹

During these years, though the public sale of liquor for profit was forbidden in Winchester, there was a "liquor agent" appointed by the town to sell wine or spirits under certain definite restrictions. There is extant² the report of David Youngman who was agent in 1852. By this it appears that he laid in forty gallons of rum but sold only five of them; that he bought twenty-nine gallons of brandy, gin and wine and sold twenty-four of them; and that his total sales amounted to \$84.15. This is surprising testimony to the inroads the temperance movement had made on the consumption of New England rum, once the staple of the Yankee taste in strong waters.³

On March 20, 1853 — a Sunday morning — the town of Winchester experienced its first serious fire; the Congregational Church, built only twelve years before, was burned to the ground. The fire was discovered at eight o'clock in the basement of the building; it seems to have been caused by an overheated furnace. The flames spread rapidly through the partitions to every part of the meetinghouse. Only the pew cushions, most of the hymn books and Sunday School library books, the pulpit furniture, a few settees and a clock were saved. A fine new organ, only four months installed, the church bell, and a clock given in 1850 by the women of Winchester were all destroyed. The loss was set at almost \$15,000; the insurance was only \$5,000.

¹ *Middlesex Journal*, November 19, 1859.

² In the collections of the Historical Society.

³ But in 1859-60 the Liquor Agent's sales amounted to \$700.

The fire burned furiously, for there was a brisk wind. The Winchester hand engine, "Excelsior," was wholly unable to deal with it, and sent out a call for help, to which three engines from Woburn, three from Medford, one from Stoneham and two from West Cambridge responded. They came too late to save the church building, but they were of service in preventing the fire from spreading to neighboring buildings. As it was, the wind carried sparks and blazing shingles far afield. The roof of Lyceum Hall caught several times, and so did three or four dwelling houses near by, but the firemen attended to these incipient blazes very promptly.¹

The blow was a severe one for the parish to bear, but it was met with courage and devotion. Plans were at once made for the building of a larger and finer church on the little hilltop. The story of that edifice, which still stands today, will be found in the chapter on the church history of Winchester.²

On the belfry of the new church, when erected, there was placed a handsome town clock, which still, after eighty years, overlooks the town. The manner of its acquisition was a little curious. One of the selectmen of the day, Mr. N. A. Richardson, recalls how he found at the post office one day in June 1854 a letter addressed to the Board of Selectmen. He put it in his pocket unopened, and carried it about with him till the next meeting day of the board. Opened at last, it was found to contain a \$500 bill, which the writer—who signed himself "A Resident of Massachusetts"—wished to offer anonymously for the purchase of a town clock. The clock was bought, and by arrangement with the committee of the new church placed upon its belfry "to be the property of the town, cared for by the town and under the control of the town at all times, according to the wishes of the donor."³

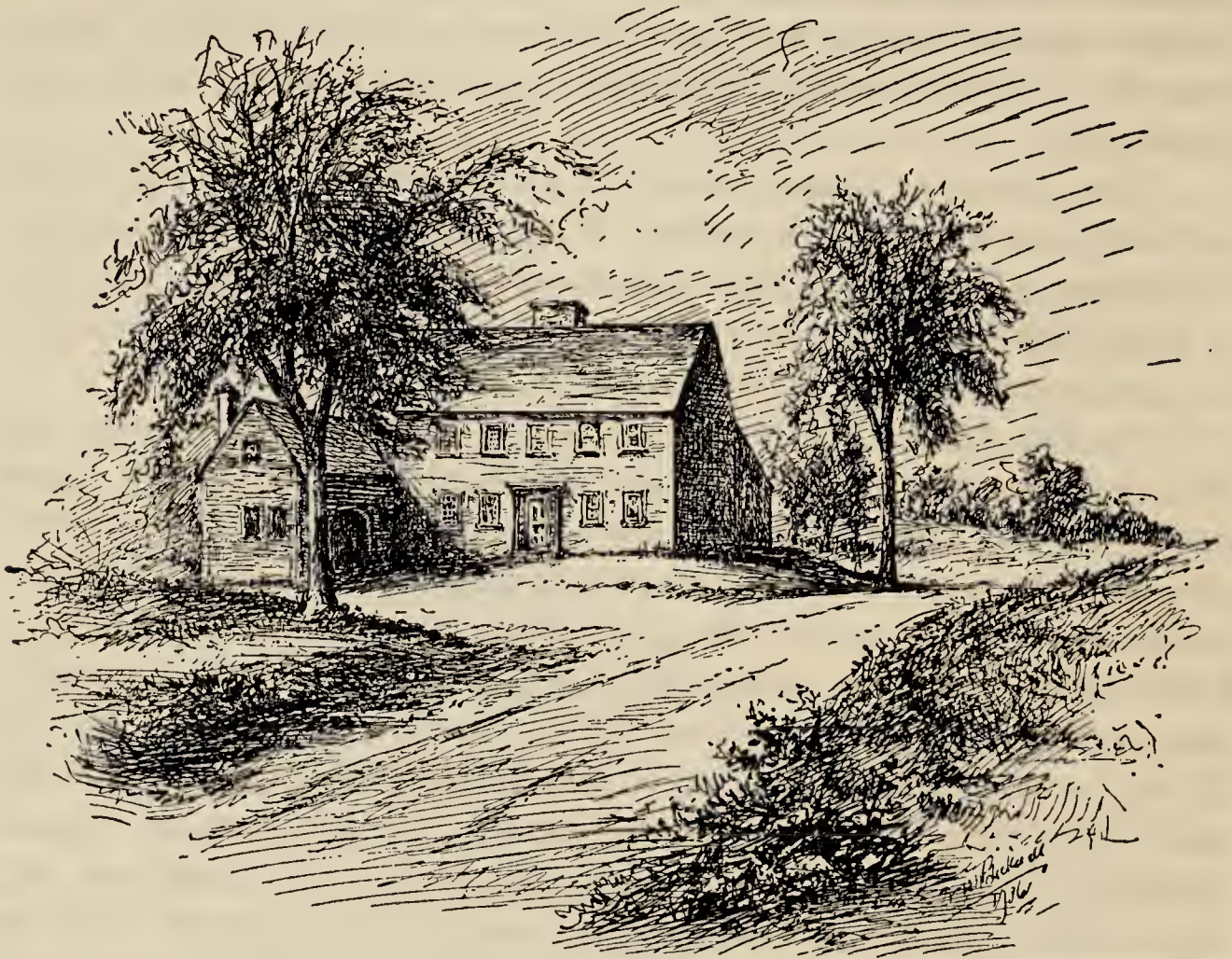
The identity of that donor remained a secret for many years. Not until after his death was it disclosed that Mr. Ebenezer Smith, who lived in 1854 on Church Street at the corner of Wildwood Street, was the generous soul who had determined, as his original letter put it, that "Winchester should have a town clock as good in every respect as the clock on the Old South Church in Boston."

¹ Woburn *Journal*, March 26, 1853.

² Chapter XVI.

³ Winchester Record, Vol. II, page 168.

The fire that destroyed the Congregational Church was not the only serious one during this period. On April 8, 1855 the factory buildings at Bacon's dam, near the Wedgemere Station, one of brick and one of wood, as well as a tenement house and a cottage that stood hard by, were burned to the ground, with a loss of at least \$15,000.¹ Again the gallant Excelsior No. 1 was supported by four engine companies from Woburn and one from Stoneham,



THE SAMUEL RICHARDSON HOUSE

but nothing was saved. And a few years later, October 21, 1857, the house and barn of N. A. Richardson of Washington Street went up in flames, and was "utterly consumed." Fire engines were of very moderate efficiency in those days, though in the case of Mr. Richardson's property it was said that an incendiary had touched it off in three or four places at once. This Richardson house was one of the oldest then standing in the town. It was built by a Samuel Richardson early in the eighteenth century.

¹ One of the mills at Bacon's dam was again burned April 6, 1861, but again rebuilt.

Having been scourged by fire, the town was next menaced by water. It was on the sixteenth of February 1855 that the great Winchester flood occurred. We have an excellent account of it furnished by an eye witness, Dr. David Youngman.¹ He awoke that morning to find the cellar of his house not only full of water but "running over." He started for his store and found the water well over the tops of his high rubber boots. It was fourteen inches deep over the railroad crossing, and the current sweeping down Main Street was so strong that he found it hard to make headway against it. Between the rising ground where the Unitarian Church now stands and that at Cutter Village everything was under water from one to two feet. Francis H. Johnson actually rowed a boat from the Harrison Parker mill at Converse bridge right through the center to Cutter's Mill.

The cellars of stores in the center were all flooded; in one there floated about "a motley collection of coal, molasses, butter, potatoes, cheese, apples, salt pork, salt fish, onions, turnips, wood and cabbages"—samples of the entire stock in trade. A bridge over the Aberjona, near the Bacon felt mill, was carried away, and road and railway tracks badly washed out. The flood subsided as rapidly as it rose. Next day the center was dry land again, though it was some time before the cellars of the houses and stores could be pumped out.

The flood was caused by an extremely heavy rain and thaw which raised the water of Wedge Pond and the river to unusual heights and by jams of floating ice at the culverts under the railway at Wedgemere Station² and at the old canal aqueduct where the river entered the Upper Mystic Lake. These prevented the discharge of the water which promptly "backed up" into the center. The damage caused by this twenty-four hour flood was considerable; by compensation it gave Winchester residents something to talk about for years.

The Winchester Light Guard was a conspicuous feature of town life in the decade of the fifties. It was organized on March 27, 1851 with a membership of some sixty or seventy men. F. O. Prince,

¹ Woburn *Journal*, February 21, 1855. See also Winchester Record, Vol. II, page 184.

² Then called Mystic Station.

who was the leading spirit in the formation of a military company in Winchester, was its first captain. The Light Guard was presently mustered into the state militia as Company E of the Fifth Regiment. When Captain Prince was promoted in May 1853 to major (and later to lieutenant colonel) of the regiment he was succeeded in the command of the company by Wallace Whitney, and he in turn by William Pratt.

At the request of the company, the selectmen provided an armory for its use, and appropriated \$75 to furnish it. The armory was on the upper floor of a two-story building called the "silk factory," because Mr. W. W. B. Lindley had for a time carried on there the manufacture of silk thread. This building stood in Main Street on the northerly side of the railway tracks opposite the Wakefield house, to which reference has been made.

The Light Guard had a rather brief existence; I have never seen its uniform described in detail, but a passing remark of John A. Bolles, made in a speech at the tenth anniversary of the town, seems to indicate that it was a brilliant one. "No trace," said Mr. Bolles, "remains of the Guard unless it be some scarlet costume that glitters in this morning's gay procession."¹ But for a time it gave a dash of color to the sober life of a New England village. "The ever-popular Winchester Light Guard," says the *Woburn Journal*, commenting on its appearance in an elaborate celebration of the Fourth of July in 1852. That was a great day in Winchester. There was a parade, with a band and the glittering Light Guard escorting a long procession of school children and citizens, not forgetting the Sons of Temperance. There was a public meeting at which Mr. C. P. Curtis, Jr. read the Declaration of Independence, and Rev. Mr. Steele delivered an oration; and odes written for the occasion by Mr. Durivage and Mr. J. C. Johnson, the organist of the Congregational Church, were sung. Then there was a great picnic at Bacon's Grove by the Aberjona, and primitive fireworks in the evening.

By 1855 the Light Guard was in decay. Interest flagged; membership fell off. The means to pay the cost of its maintenance could not be found. On March 27, the fourth anniversary of its establishment, it was disbanded. Its place in the regiment was taken by the recently organized Lawrence Light Guard of Medford.

¹ Winchester Record, Vol. I, page 343; Vol. II, page 327.

A few Winchester men then and in later years, enlisted in the Woburn Mechanic's Phalanx. No other regular militia company has existed in the town since 1855, except for a year or two during the World War.

An interesting Winchester institution at this time was the industrial school which was maintained for several years in the large house built by Rev. Mr. Steele on what is now Highland Avenue. This school was a charity for orphaned or neglected girls of Boston. It was supported by a society of Boston women, among whom we find such well-known names as Mrs. A. H. Everett, Mrs. P. C. Brooks, Mrs. F. Gordon Dexter, Mrs. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Mrs. J. L. Bowditch and Mrs. S. Parkman. Mrs. C. P. Curtis, Jr., herself a resident of Winchester, was one of the board of managers. The Steele house, then (1855) vacant, was thought suitable for the purposes of such a school. Mrs. Daniel Sharon, a very capable woman, whose descendants still live in Winchester, was appointed matron, and we gather from an annual report of the school still preserved¹ that she was a satisfactory one. The girls were to be given simple training in "household labor" as well as a common school education. There were twenty-five or thirty girls in attendance during the four or five years that the school remained in Winchester. They were marshalled to the Unitarian Sunday School by Mrs. Sharon on every Lord's Day, and formed the backbone of that infant institution. About 1859 the school was removed to Dorchester.

In 1853 Winchester was greatly excited over the prospect of another line of railway, which was projected to run through the town. This was the "Stoneham Branch" so-called, which was chartered May 15, 1852, with a capital of \$100,000. The idea was to give Stoneham, then without rail connection with Boston, access either to the Boston and Lowell or the Boston and Maine tracks. The natural course would have been to make connection with the Lowell road at or near Winchester, as was finally done. But some one conceived the plan of carrying the tracks through Winchester and Medford, and joining the Boston and Maine road at Medford Square. A number of Winchester people were interested, for the town was then out of sorts with the Lowell road which had recently

¹ In the Winchester Historical Society's collections.

increased — indeed very nearly doubled — its fares to Boston. Some money was raised here, and more in Stoneham and Medford; a contractor, one Cahill of Worcester, was found who would take a quantity of stock for the work of building the road.

Here in Winchester the Stoneham Branch was to parallel the Lowell tracks from the Woburn line to the village. It was to run right through the mill pond in the center, pass alongside the Aberjona to a point near Mystic Avenue, where it turned eastward, slanted up the hillside to Symmes Corner, and then ran southward, not far from Main Street, into Medford. A good deal of the necessary grading was done; a gravel embankment was built to raise the tracks above the level of the river as far as Mystic Avenue, and a cut made to carry them up the hillside and under Main Street, where a bridge was built near the present corner of Marshall Road. The line continued east of Main Street across the low land, then partially filled with a shallow pond — probably an old beaver pond — and beyond that all the way to the Medford line. Traces of the old grade can still be seen here and there along this route; the gravel embankment near the center was long ago used to fill up the shallow backwaters of the Aberjona, which formerly covered much of the land where the Mystic Valley Parkway now runs and that in the rear of the Junior High School building.

The Stoneham branch was inadequately financed from the beginning; it was a waste of materials and money to build so many miles of unnecessary track, and it was violently opposed by many landowners in Medford. In July 1853 the contractor Cahill went into bankruptcy; no money could be found to keep the project alive, and the vision faded. With it disappeared several thousand dollars of Winchester money.

While railways are under discussion it may be mentioned that in 1851 the Lowell Railroad removed the old station at the center and built a new and larger one on the same spot. The “depot,” a sufficiently modest structure, was highly complimented in the newspapers of the day. It was noted as a remarkable fact that it was — like the Lyceum Building — lighted with gas manufactured in the basement of the latter building.¹ This was perhaps the product of the Winchester Gas Company, a corporation formed by Charles McIntire, Aaron D. Weld and Benjamin Abrahams in

¹ Woburn *Journal*, March 13, 1852.

1852.¹ This company made some experiments in the manufacture of gas, but it was never able to raise the capital for commercial success, and disappeared, leaving behind it no ripple pronounced enough to stir men's memories.

The company in Arlington brought its pipes to Winchester in 1860, and put up a gasometer at the corner of Church and Fletcher streets, a familiar object in that vicinity for more than half a century. The pipes were carried all the way down Church Street to the center, along Main Street from O. R. Clark's house in Cutter Village to Symmes Corner, and up Washington Street as far as Eaton Street.² The Congregational Church, Lyceum Hall, and several stores and private residences made use of the new illuminant, but it was a number of years before the service was extended into any of the side streets. Kerosene remained the source of light in almost all houses until at least 1880. By that time most of the stores had been piped and those who chose could discard their oil lamps. If they were wise, however, they kept them handy, for service in those days was not as dependable as it has since become. Frost or water in the pipes, and an occasional break due to the settling of the ground after a hard winter not infrequently interrupted the flow of gas.

Street lights were few and far between. Most were simply kerosene lamps erected on posts, usually by householders. There is no reference to street lighting by the town in the records until the March meeting of 1861, when \$125 was voted to install a few gas lamps at the center. The records are again silent until November 1863, when it was again voted to maintain a few lights at or near the center and to permit private citizens, "not to exceed six," to put up gas lights near their houses, the gas to be paid for, I presume, by the town.³

As a matter of melancholy interest, it may be noted here that Winchester was visited in the winter of 1859-60 by an epidemic of scarlet fever. Scores of children fell sick, and at least ten deaths occurred, including children of Mr. John R. Cobb, Mr. E. A. Wadleigh and Mr. T. P. Tenney. In two cases two children in the same family were taken.⁴

¹ Incorporated April 12, 1852, Chapter 102, Acts of the Legislature in that year.

² *Middlesex Journal*, June 2, 1860, September 8, 1860.

³ Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, page 419.

⁴ *Middlesex Journal*, January 14, January 21, February 11, 1860.

CHAPTER XIV

MEN AND EVENTS IN THE SIXTIES. WINCHESTER IN THE CIVIL WAR

THE population of Winchester in 1850 was 1,350. Ten years later it had increased to 1,937. Numbered among the new residents whose families helped to enable the town to show this thrifty gain in population were several who were to become conspicuous in the history of Winchester.

First of all should be mentioned the name of David N. Skillings, who first settled here in 1854, and whose integrity, generosity and public spirit made him, before his death, twenty-five years later, recognized as the first citizen of the town. Mr. Skillings was a native of Maine. Without advantages of birth or means he made his own fortunes — and very successfully. When he came to Winchester, still a young man, he was already well to do, a member of a firm conducting a large business in lumber. In the years that followed he became wealthy, but he remained unassuming in his manners, and he was devoted to the welfare and improvement of Winchester as few of its citizens have been. He was a religious man, deacon of the Congregational Church and generous in all benevolences. In politics he was a Democrat of the old school. He will be mentioned often in the pages that are to follow.

Sherburn T. Sanborn, who came to Winchester a year or two earlier, was another successful Boston business man. He built the large and imposing house which stood within the memory of many on the ground where the Winchester Chambers have since been built.

Aaron D. Weld came to Winchester in 1850 and soon became prominent in all town affairs. He died in the service during the Civil War; it was for him that the Winchester Grand Army Post was named. He too was a Boston business man, and a leading member of the Baptist Church.

J. B. Judkins lived on Washington Street and owned a quantity

of land between the street and the banks of the river; the artificial pond created by running the railway right of way across Black Ball Pond was often in later years called Judkins Pond since his land very nearly encircled it.

Several lawyers with extensive practice in Boston found Winchester so attractive that they removed thither at this time. Among them were A. K. P. Joy, who lived on the site of the new public



THE E. A. BRACKETT HOUSE

library, Abraham B. Coffin, who occupied the stone house on Forest Street, built as I have recorded by Jason Richardson, and E. A. Wadleigh,¹ whose deep interest in Winchester schools was commemorated in the grammar school building on Washington Street.

Edward A. Brackett, sculptor, painter, and lover of wild life, is another whose name should be remembered. He was for many years the active member of the first Massachusetts Fish and Game Commission. He was an artist of talent, but his interests in life were various. At his home, a picturesque octagonal house on High-

¹ Later a Clerk of the Superior Court.

land Avenue,¹ he was an enthusiastic grower of fruit, and especially of fine grapes. He bred Chinese pheasants on the edge of the woods that have since become part of the Middlesex Fells, and built for a private fish hatchery, the stone building near South Border Road that is now a headquarters for the Winchester Boy Scouts.

Samuel W. Twombly, a well-known Boston florist, who became a devoted lover of Winchester, Alfred Norton, a Boston paper dealer who was often in public office and for many years in the Boston Custom House, Lieutenant William F. Spicer, an officer in the United States navy, whose house overlooked Wedge Pond from its southern shore, Thomas P. Tenney, William Pratt, a clock merchant who lived on a portion of the old Symmes farm near the western end of Bacon Street, Edmund Dwight, who occupied what is now the Langley estate opposite the Country Club, Irving S. Palmer, a son-in-law of Harrison Parker the elder, and a partner in his large business in mahogany lumber, the brothers Albert and Thomas Prentiss Ayer, R. T. Whitten and John C. Mason were all new residents who gave character and importance to the growing town. It was the first flush of the suburban era when successful men from the city were seeking out pleasanter homes among the wider spaces and the verdure of the countryside, and Winchester was attractive enough to draw to it a considerable proportion of the outflowing tide.²

It was in these years that the most distinguished man who ever lived on Winchester soil built his mansion here — Edward Everett, president of Harvard, Governor of Massachusetts, United States Senator, minister to Great Britain, candidate for Vice-President, orator at Gettysburg on the day when Abraham Lincoln delivered his brief but immortal address. Mr. Everett was attracted to Winchester not only by the beauty of the shores of the Mystic Lakes but by the fact that his brother-in-law, Peter Chardon Brooks, lived just on the other side of the lakes in West Medford, and his nephew, Francis A. Durivage, a brilliant writer and linguist, who had been Mr. Everett's private secretary, lived in Winchester itself.

¹ Later the home of H. C. Wellington.

² A statistician in the *Middlesex Journal* of February 9, 1861 found 89 Winchester citizens whose business was in Boston.

Mr. Everett bought the level piece of ground at the foot of Myopia Hill, traditionally known as the Pond Plain, of Deacon Luke Wyman, whose house, modernized, stands on Old Mystic Street at the top of the Country Club hill today. It was a beautiful site for a mansion, and Mr. Everett's diary¹ several times refers to the "delightful situation," "more beautiful than I had imagined." He bought also a considerable part of the high land on Myopia Hill from Deacon Wyman and Samuel Gardner.

The house was built in 1859, a large and, as was then considered, an "elegant" building, with a charming prospect across Mystic Lake to the heights beyond. Mr. Everett spent no little time here, but the house was designed to be the home of his son Edward, of whom he was extremely fond. The untimely death of this brilliant young man in 1864 was a severe blow to the aging father. He seems to have lost his interest in the fine estate he had created. At this time the building of the dam between the two Mystic Lakes to form a reservoir for the Charlestown Water Works raised the level of the lake along the shores of the estate six feet. Every effort was made by the engineers to build up the bank behind the Everett house so that no land would be flooded and no damage of any kind done to the property. It is hard to see how any was done, but Mr. Everett insisted that his estate was spoiled and brought suit against Charlestown for a large sum of money. Before the case was decided he was dead, of a pneumonia contracted, perhaps, by his attendance at a hearing in connection with his suit. The referees awarded his estate \$11,000, an exceedingly generous sum.

The Everett mansion became the property of William Everett, a son, who occasionally occupied it. This gentleman was for some time a professor at Harvard, and later head master of Adams Academy at Quincy. For several years he was a member of Congress. Professor Everett was among the founders of the Unitarian Church in Winchester, and once (1869) moderator of the town meeting. The mansion was sold by him in 1876. It has since had several occupants, the latest of whom was Willard D. Robinson, the owner of the well-known Belmont Spring and promoter of the Belmont Spring Country Club. As "Robinson Park" the estate is

¹ Preserved in the Massachusetts Historical Society Collections.

now a recent real estate development; the future of the old house is uncertain, and it may soon be pulled down.

Another distinguished man who came to reside in Winchester at this time, though the exigencies of his profession gave him little time to spend in the town until after the close of the Civil War, was Captain — later Admiral — Henry Knox Thatcher. Admiral Thatcher was a grandson of General Henry Knox, Washington's Secretary of War. He was a naval officer of distinction, who won fame by his part, under Farragut, in the capture of Mobile. He lived in the house built by Colonel S. B. White at the northern end of Wedge Pond, now the residence of Thomas Quigley, Jr. His dignified and rather imposing figure was familiar in the streets of Winchester until his death in 1880.

As the critical year of 1860 approached, Winchester like other New England towns grew apprehensive and disturbed. There was anti-slavery sentiment here, as there was throughout this section, but apart from mention of a "Female Emancipation Society" in South Woburn as early as 1846 I have found no evidence of an anti-slavery organization in town. There was certainly no station of the "underground railway" here, as there was in the neighboring town of Stoneham; and a very large proportion of the substantial men of the town were either Democrats or Whigs, more alarmed by the enthusiasms of the newly founded Republican party than sympathetic with them.

But John Brown's execution brought out a wave of powerful anti-slavery feeling. On the day he was hanged, December 2, 1859, the bells of the town were tolled between the hours of eleven and twelve, and in the evening there was a great public meeting in Lyceum Hall addressed by the Baptist minister, Rev. Mr. Eddy, Alfred Norton, Sumner Richardson, Nathaniel A. Richardson and others.

The presidential campaign of the next autumn was lively with meetings and political parades. At the election the Lincoln electoral ticket carried the town with 190 votes. The Douglas electors had 93 votes, the Breckenridge electors 4, Bell and Everett (Edward Everett), the old Whig or Constitutional Union candidates, received no less than 78, an indication of the strength of the Whig sentiment

still existing in Winchester. At the same time, Oliver R. Clark, the Republican candidate for state Senator, and Alfred Norton, the Republican named for Representative to the legislature, were beaten. A fusion of Whigs and Democrats had been formed to check the advance of the new party, and Charles Heywood, its candidate for the legislature, defeated Norton 185 to 170.

With the news of the fall of Fort Sumter there came a surge of loyal sentiment. The pastors of the Congregational and Baptist churches preached stirring sermons, the Stars and Stripes were everywhere displayed, and on April 22, 1861 there was a public meeting in Lyceum Hall, at which Dr. Chapin presided, and F. O. Prince, Dr. Ingalls, B. F. Thompson, Salem Wilder and J. F. Stone made patriotic speeches. Nineteen young men volunteered to form a local military company, and a subscription paper to furnish the money necessary to equip such a company was signed by men who promised to pay a total of \$2,850. This amount was increased by later subscriptions to more than \$3,750 but only \$412.13 was ever collected.¹ The town proved too small to raise a full company. Thirty-five volunteers for three months service were finally raised. These men first attached themselves to the Lexington company, but withdrew from it when the town of Lexington declined to vote a sum of money for the payment of volunteers or those dependent on them during their term of service.² Some of the Winchester men enlisted in the Woburn Phalanx, others in the Light Guard of Medford, still others in the various companies and regiments being formed in Boston. It is noted in the newspapers of the day that Mr. Foss of Winchester had no less than five sons among these early volunteers, and Mrs. Benjamin Abrahams three.³

It had not proved difficult to supply a sufficient number of volunteers for the three months service originally required by President Lincoln's order; but as the war prolonged itself, as the calls came not for three months but for three years service, Winchester was often put to it to fill the quota of recruits assigned to it. The action of the town in the support of the war and in encouraging enlistments may conveniently be summarized by extracts from the records of votes passed at successive town meetings.

¹ *Middlesex Journal*, April 27, 1862; August 24, 1861.

² *Middlesex Journal*, June 1, 1861.

³ *Middlesex Journal*, September 28, 1861.

On June 10, 1861 it was voted "to furnish to the families of the volunteers belonging to the town such aid as they may need, so long as such volunteers shall be engaged in state or United States service; such aid to be paid out of any monies in the town treasury."¹

On March 24, 1862 it was voted to borrow \$1,800 to be used for "aid to the families of volunteers now enlisted in the United States service."²

By July 1862 matters had become very serious. A public meeting, presided over by Thomas P. Ayer, was called to devise ways and means to raise the town's quota of the three hundred thousand men just called for by the President; and a committee of which Oliver R. Clark was chairman was appointed to prepare a vote to be presented to the town meeting called for July 16. The committee reported and the town passed a vote authorizing the selectmen "to pay a bounty of \$100 to each person who has been or shall be enlisted or mustered into the volunteer service . . . as part of the quota of this town."³ This bounty proved an effective recruiting sergeant; the quota of twenty-five men was promptly filled.

But hard on the heels of the President's call came another for three hundred thousand more men; the battles of the Peninsula Campaign and at Shiloh had taken a heavy toll. In this call provision was made for drafting, if a sufficient number of volunteers did not present themselves; but Winchester, like all the rest of Massachusetts, under the inspiring leadership of Governor Andrew, was determined not to resort to the draft. Another great "war meeting" was held in advance of the town meeting of August 19. Mr. Ayer was again chairman, Dr. Chapin and Mr. Clark spoke with great effect, and a "rallying committee" of thirty-two headed by Abijah Thompson, 3d was appointed to speed enlistments. The town meeting in due course voted another bounty of \$100 to all who should enlist under the second call, and authorized the selectmen to borrow \$4,000 to pay the same.⁴ Fourteen of the town's quota of forty-three were enrolled at an enthusiastic public meeting in Lyceum Hall after the adjournment of the town meeting. Among

¹ Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, page 356.

² Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, page 376.

³ Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, page 383.

⁴ Winchester Town Records, Vol. I, page 385.

them were two sons of Mr. J. Hunnewell, making four from that family in the uniform.

Before the quota was filled it had been raised by the authority of the Governor to sixty men. A town meeting held November 29, 1862 voted to increase the amount of the bounty to \$150 and to authorize the selectmen to secure the additional men needed by "transfer" from some other town. In this way some twenty men who had enlisted in Reading, beyond the quota of that town, were transferred to Winchester and the ranks were thus filled. By March 1863 the selectmen reported that one hundred and eight men from our town were in the service.¹

In November 1863, another call for three hundred thousand men having been issued, the town appointed a committee, of which J. F. Stone was chairman, to encourage recruiting. The committee called a "war meeting" for November 21 in Lyceum Hall, and another for two days later. There was abundance of patriotic oratory on both occasions, more than \$3,000 was subscribed to supplement the town's bounty money, and in a few weeks it was announced that the Winchester quota was filled, with a surplus of six men.²

At the town meeting of March 25, 1864 the town voted to raise \$7,100 by taxation, to be used in recruiting soldiers, and on June 10 a bounty of \$125 was voted to every man who should enlist during the year.

In July 1864 came another and final call for men. The Winchester quota was 38; it was filled without serious difficulty.³ Thus honorably and without recourse to any form of conscription Winchester bore its part in filling the ranks of the armies that saved the Union from disruption. In all 244 men are credited to the town, 31 of them in the naval service. Ten died in active service: George W. L. Sanborn, Josiah Stratton, Jr., Aaron D. Weld, Jefferson Ford, John Fitzgerald, Francis A. Hatch, Joshua T. Lawrence, John Gordon, Ira Johonnott and Francis B. Bedell. Of these, Hatch, it is strange to recall, served but eight days in the army. Enlisted on August 1, 1862 in the Second Massachusetts, he fell at Cedar Mountain on August 9.

Aaron D. Weld and Captain Jefferson Ford whose names are

¹ Selectmen's Report, 1863.

² *Middlesex Journal*, November 28, 1863, January 16, 1864.

³ *Middlesex Journal*, September 17, 1864.

found in the list of ten were two of the best-known citizens of the town. Of Mr. Weld I have already said something. He was a successful business man and active in public affairs, a former selectman and member of the School Committee. He served in the navy as an assistant paymaster, and died at sea on the steamer *Ocean Queen* June 11, 1862. The Winchester Post of the Grand Army of the Republic was named for him.

Jefferson Ford lived in Winchester many years, though his profession, which was that of a ship captain in the merchant service, kept him much away from home. His wife was of old Winchester stock, the daughter of Joseph Brown Symmes and the great-granddaughter of Hezekiah Wyman.¹ Already elderly at the outbreak of the war he patriotically offered his services to the government, and was sailing master on several vessels attached to the North Atlantic Squadron — the *Ohio*, *Princeton* and *Monticello*. He died at Beaufort, North Carolina, June 18, 1864.²

A man whose home was in Winchester, but who enlisted from elsewhere, was a member of the crew of the *Monitor* during its famous battle with the converted ironclad *Merrimac* in Hampton Roads. This man was John H. Carter; he was a boiler maker in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and he volunteered to sail on the *Monitor* when it left the yard to try its improved mettle against the Confederate ram. After the regular gunners had been stunned by the impact of a Confederate shell on the *Monitor's* turret, Carter joined the improvised gun crew. He is said to have aimed the final shot that pierced the hull of the *Merrimac* below the iron plating and drove her to take refuge in Norfolk Harbor, where she was subsequently blown up.³

Among the prominent men of the town who saw active service were, of course, Admiral Thatcher and Lieutenant — later Captain — Spicer, who were officers in the regular navy, John A. Bolles, who served as captain on the staff of General John A. Dix, was then appointed a judge advocate general with the rank of major, and finally won the rank of brevet colonel and brevet major general

¹ See Chapter VIII, page 104.

² For a complete list of Winchester men in the Civil War, with their military or naval records, see "Winchester War Records," published by the town in 1925.

³ See Russell H. Conwell's lecture before the Winchester G. A. R., Woburn Journal, February 13, 1875.

by active service in the field, and Dr. William Ingalls. Dr. Ingalls was chief surgeon first of the Fifth and then of the Fifty-Ninth Massachusetts regiments, and rose to be chief surgeon of the artillery brigade, of the Ninth Army Corps. He was forty-five years of age at the time of his original enlistment, and is said to have been the oldest surgeon from the state in active field service. Neither Colonel Bolles nor Dr. Ingalls returned to Winchester after the war. The former made his home in Washington, where he held various political offices, and the latter removed to Boston where he was long a successful surgeon.

Officially the town raised and paid out \$12,031.14 during the war in aid to the families of volunteers enlisted from Winchester. It paid in bounties to the volunteers themselves more than \$15,000. Besides these sums, several thousand dollars—the exact amount is not available—were raised by private subscription and applied to the uses of the town in recruiting or to the aid of soldiers in the field.

No account of the war activities of Winchester would be complete without grateful mention of the work of the Soldiers Aid Society. This was composed of a large number of the women of the town, who met regularly during the war years, sometimes in private houses, sometimes in the Congregational vestry or a hall in the Lyceum Building, to cut and sew on all sorts of clothing for the soldiers and to roll bandages or prepare other hospital supplies to be sent to the front. Mrs. Charles P. Curtis, Jr. was its president, and Miss Caroline Ford, a daughter of Captain Ford, its treasurer. Mrs. T. P. Tenney, Mrs. Stephen A. Holt, Mrs. D. N. Skillings, Mrs. Harrison Parker, Mrs. Zebediah Abbott and Mrs. S. D. Quimby were among the ladies most frequently mentioned as active in the work of the Society. On February 5, 1863 there was a "levee" in Lyceum Hall, organized by the Soldiers Aid, to raise money for its use. It was a lively social affair, if the contemporary accounts are to be trusted. All the time-tested expedients of "fairs" and "bazaars" to beguile money from the pockets of those who attended were employed, and the society profited to the amount of \$200. An elaborate musical programme concluded the entertainment.¹

¹ *Middlesex Journal*, February 14, 1863.

A report of the work of the Soldiers Aid Society made in January 1864 shows that up to that time it had collected \$948.28 — of which \$300 was a donation from a sympathizer in England, Mr. E. V. Ashton — and that it had made and sent to the Sanitary Commission for distribution to the army 37 quilts, 11 blankets, 107 pillow cases, 146 towels, 193 handkerchiefs, 110 flannel shirts, 259 cotton shirts and drawers, 250 pairs of knitted stockings, 66 sheets, 13 bedgowns, and a great quantity of lint, linen and cotton bandages, wines, jellies, books, stationery and miscellaneous supplies, besides boxes of food and delicacies to Winchester soldiers in the Forty-Fifth and other Massachusetts regiments.¹ To this generous total more was added during the closing year of the war.

It was during the war years that the city of Charlestown, in need of an additional supply of water, got from the legislature authority to put up a dam between the Upper and Lower Mystic Lakes,² at the narrow point called "the Partings." In the lower lake the water was still somewhat brackish. Charlestown was to take its supply wholly from the Upper Lake, above the dam, reënforced by the still unpolluted waters of the Aberjona, which the dam would impound.

Work on the dam at the Partings began in 1863. It was completed in the following year, and the water began to accumulate behind it. In the end the level of the old Upper Pond was raised by six feet, and a new Upper Pond was created by the flooding of the Symmes or Bacon meadow, through which the Aberjona had until then pursued its winding way. The mouth of the river, which had previously been at the "Narrows," just above the house of the Winchester Boat Club, retreated to its present position, and the Upper Lake took on the aspect it presents today. The former character of the bottom is still recalled in late summer days, when a lusty growth of marsh grass can often be seen thrusting itself above the surface of the water at the shallow end of the lake near the river's mouth.

The Charlestown Water Commissioners did what they could to neutralize any damage that the rising water might cause to shore

¹ *Middlesex Journal*, January 23, 1864.

² Chapter 105, Acts of 1862.

property by building up the bank of the lake whenever there was any danger of its being overflowed. But they were sued, as I have noticed above, by Mr. Everett, and had to pay substantial damages. They were sued also by Mr. John H. Bacon, who had a much better case than Mr. Everett, since his meadow land was irretrievably flooded. He was able, however, to recover a judgment for only \$3,000 and there is no evidence that he ever took the trouble to collect that.

The raising of the water level by six feet rendered practically useless the water power at the old Symmes or Bacon dam, which stood a little way below the present Wedgemere Station, with at least two mill buildings upon it. One of these buildings was occupied by a Mr. Allen, who conducted the "Fibrilla Mills" for the making of fabrics from flax. The Charlestown commissioners had the right to remove the dam as an obstruction to their supply of water, and they finally did so; but at the instance, as it appears, of the Fish Committee of Winchester.

The Fish Committee was first appointed at the town meeting of March 27, 1861. E. A. Brackett, C. P. Curtis, Jr. and Francis H. Johnson were its original members. It was charged with the protection of fish in the waterways of the town and the provision of means whereby several varieties of fish — in particular the alewives — might get around mill dams and ascend the Aberjona River. Fish were still plenty in the lakes, and the spring run of alewives was large enough to pretty nearly cover the surface of the river in good seasons.¹

In the discharge of their duties the committee built a fishway at the Bacon dam, but they were in frequent trouble with Mr. Allen, who resented interference with his dam and was accustomed to close up the fishway whenever he wanted more water for his mill wheel. In disgust the Fish Committee appealed to the Charlestown Water Commissioners to remove the dam altogether. On May 7, 1864 Mr. McDonald, superintendent of the water works, accompanied by several workmen and equipped with a couple of kegs of gunpowder, presented himself at the Fibrilla Flax Mills.

¹ The Fish Committee maintained an existence until the nineties of the last century, when the increasing pollution of the Aberjona and Mystic waters left it with no fish to protect. Beside caring for the fishways it occasionally planted young fish in the lake, and had control of issuing permits for anglers to fish there.

The manager thereof was inclined to resist but he was gently but firmly led away by two of Mr. McDonald's men, the kegs of gunpowder were placed in position, and the ensuing explosion pretty completely wrecked the dam.¹ For a short time a steam engine was employed to furnish power to the waterless mill, but it was soon abandoned and removed. The Bacons had previously removed their own felt business to a factory which stood where Lakeview Road now runs; and after that burned in 1880 they built and operated the mill still standing near the railway tracks below Wedgemere Station.

When, toward the close of the war, Dr. Ingalls determined to remove permanently from Winchester his place was taken by Dr. Frederick Winsor. A man of high attainments and striking personality, Dr. Winsor quickly became "the beloved physician," skillful in his profession, active in the affairs of the community, admired and honored by all his townsmen. A graduate of Harvard College (1851) and Medical School, he first practised in Salem, and was for a time in charge of the hospital on Rainsford Island in Boston Harbor. He served as surgeon with the Forty-ninth Regiment during the Civil War and came to Winchester in 1864, buying and living in Dr. Ingalls's house at the corner of Main and Pleasant (now Mt. Vernon) streets. Behind this house was a garden and orchard extending back to the river bank, concealed from the street by a high board fence, and on this land Mrs. Winsor built a small house in which she kept a private school for girls, herself the teacher.² Mrs. Winsor was as energetic and as cultivated as her husband, instant in every good work in the community, and the mother of a family of six fine children who inherited the talents and the charm of their parents. To mention only the most distinguished of them, one was Robert Winsor, the Boston banker, long the head of Kidder Peabody & Co., another was Frederick, founder and headmaster of the Middlesex School at Concord, and another was Mary, the founder of Miss Winsor's School for Girls, a famous Boston institution for half a century.

¹ *Middlesex Journal*, May 14, 1864; *Medford Historical Register*, Vol. XXXI, No. 3, page 67. Article by Moses W. Mann.

² *Recollections of Henry C. Robinson*.



DR. AND MRS. FREDERICK WINSOR WITH THEIR FAMILY



In later years Dr. Winsor moved his house from the center up the hill to a new site on Vine Street. The house, altered beyond recognition and once damaged by fire, is that formerly occupied by the Knights of Columbus and now by the local lodge of Odd Fellows.

Dr. Winsor was an earnest Unitarian in religion, and instrumental above all others in the formation of a church of that denomination in Winchester.¹ After twenty-five years of an exacting medical practice, his health gave way. He visited Bermuda in the hope of finding benefit from its mild climate, but died there February 25, 1889, leaving behind him the fragrant memory of a busy and unselfish life, and mourned by the entire town as few of its citizens have ever been. His rather tall, spare figure and his keenly intelligent face, with its flowing beard and its bright, kindly, somewhat quizzical eyes, remained — and for a few still remain — enshrined in the memory of those who knew and loved him.

On September 2, 1865 the *Woburn Journal* chronicled the purchase by Mr. D. N. Skillings of five acres of land "between the railroad and Church Street." This was the nucleus of the estate which, though now much built upon, is still known by the name of Rangeley, which Mr. Skillings gave it. This land in spite of its nearness to the village center had long been neglected — it is hard to see just why. It was in 1865 pretty well overgrown with pine and hardwood trees, locally called "Collins's Woods," from the name of a former owner — the Thomas Collins from whom the Congregational Church bought the land for its meetinghouse. Mr. Skillings cut down much of the wood, bought additional land to the south — a part of the old Symmes farm — and developed the whole into a charming park-like estate, which still retains a great deal of its quiet, natural unspoiled beauty, though so near to the heart of the town. He set up a substantial and costly stone wall along the entire frontage of the estate on Church Street and built near the lower end of his property a mansion house, greatly admired by his fellow citizens, which has only lately been pulled down.

As time went on, Mr. Skillings built several other houses

¹ See Chapter XVI.

within the limits of his property which he sold or leased to those whom he wished to be his neighbors. He also put up a building behind his own residence for the use of the Adelpian Club, a lively social institution of the day, which, on taking possession of its new quarters, was rechristened the Back Log Club. Its membership included many families of the town — men and women, old and young — and during the months from October to June its hall was in frequent use for literary and musical entertainments, dances, and dramatic performances. The Back Log Club flourished for nearly twenty years — a very delightful center for the social activities of a town still small enough for everyone to know everyone else, and for all to take their pleasure together.

At about the time that Rangeley was developed, Mr. Abijah Thompson, a son of Deacon B. F. Thompson, and, with his brother Stephen, the Deacon's successor in the tannery business, conceived the idea of a somewhat similar estate on the level land along the Aberjona at the foot of Mystic Avenue. He went to some expense in filling and grading the land but in the end gave up the project, perhaps because he found the site too low, perhaps because it was too near the railway freight yards and commercial establishments on what is now Manchester Field. He built instead on Church Street; the house still stands at the corner of Glen Road. The only memorial of his original project is the brick work at the head of the little island in the Aberjona, built as a support to a bridge to give access to the proposed estate.

It was during the years immediately following the Civil War that the game of baseball began to spread like wildfire over the country. The first game reported as having been played in Winchester was that of October 10, 1868, wherein the Eagles of Woburn triumphed over the Clippers of Winchester by the score of 31 to 26. But a year earlier we find the Winchester correspondent of the Woburn newspaper much exercised over the way in which the public was "running wild" over the new sport. "The youngest boy," he complains, "hardly able to handle a bat, up to full-grown men, all are full of this one idea. . . . The community has baseball on the brain. Many serious results are likely to ensue from playing this game. We have just read of a Troy printer, who while playing baseball threw back his arm with such violence as to break the

bone short off near the shoulder. . . . Besides it is a question whether these gatherings of young folks have a beneficial effect upon their morals . . . by inducing betting which is apt to be attendant on such exhibitions. We do not wish to . . . disparage the game, but let it be confined within reasonable limits. . . . Let us hope the newspapers may not be surfeited with accounts of . . . these trials of skill.”¹

So spoke sober sentiment in Winchester in 1867. What would Mr. Wadleigh, who wrote the words, say, if he could witness a “World Series” game of seventy years later! In spite of the alarm with which he viewed baseball the sport quickly became popular in Winchester. The Mystic Ball Club was organized, and played frequent games with teams from other towns on “Bacon Field” near the corner of Church and Bacon Streets — the land through which Stratford Road now runs. The *Woburn Journal* if not “surfeited” with accounts of these games, certainly recorded not a few of them. Bacon Field remained the arena for out-door sports until the development of Manchester Field in the nineties. Since that splendid field was made, it has been the scene of all the important baseball and football games played in Winchester.

An incident of the sixties that made a deep impression on the townspeople was the explosion of the boiler of the locomotive “Essex” while it was standing on the crossing at the center. This accident occurred on the afternoon of January 29, 1866. The Essex, which was drawing a freight train toward Boston, had been brought to a stop at the Winchester station, which then stood beside the crossing, as the reader has been told more than once. The engineer was leaning from his cab talking with the flagman at the crossing, when with a terrific roar the engine boiler burst. The engineer and fireman were tossed out of the cab, but escaped with some scalding from steam and boiling water. The flagman, Robert Connor, was less fortunate. Pieces of flying metal almost cut his head from his body; he lived only a few hours.

The explosion was heard all over town. It broke almost every pane of glass in Lyceum Hall and in the stores around the center. Pieces of boiler metal littered the Common and were even thrown

¹ *Woburn Journal*, October 5, 1867.

as far as the Congregational Church grounds. If the boiler had given way a minute later the loss of life might have been considerable, for the passenger train from Boston was approaching the station and would shortly have come to a stand right beside the "Essex."

In 1872 the location of the railway station, which had stood for more than thirty years beside the crossing in the center, was moved some eight hundred feet to the south, where it stands today. With the increase of traffic both by rail and highway, the old situation had become something of a nuisance, for the frequent trains that stopped there could not but block the crossing completely a good many times in the day. The new station — today the old station — aroused in the minds of Winchester folk of 1872 a degree of admiration which, after sixty years of experience with the building, seems to us a little excessive. But it was a commodious and not ill-looking structure, and it was perhaps, as it was hailed, "an ornament to the town."¹ Common Street on both the easterly and southerly side of the Common was built at the same time to give access to the new station.

This desirable result was not attained, however, without some bitter factional fighting in the town meetings. The railway company had bought the property where the station now stands after consultation with a committee of the town, of which Mr. Skillings was chairman, and Mr. Joy, Mr. Metcalf, Mr. Dwinell, Mr. Ham and Mr. Woodbury were members. A party in the town which wanted the station on the easterly side of the track and nearer the crossing at the center, pretended that Mr. Skillings had used underground influence to get it put near his Rangeley property. He replied, reasonably enough, that the new location would hurt his property rather than help it, and the railway directors insisted that they had selected the site for the station because no land nearer the center was offered them at any but exorbitant prices.

The matter was fought out in half a dozen town meetings, at some of which there was much disorder and no little angry talk. One argument was that the new station would be so near the Thompson tannery that nobody could wait on the platform without holding his nose; and that would seem to have been the only good ground for protest against the railway's decision. In the end

¹ *Woburn Journal*, August 24, 1872.

the railway held all the cards. It had bought the land, and would build nowhere else. If the town did not like it, it could put up with the old station with all its inconveniences. Faced with this dilemma, the opposition — which for a time seemed to control the town meetings — had to give in with what grace it could, and the tempest died away amid sultry grumblings in the newspaper.¹ The station arose just where the railway directors and Mr. Skillings' committee had agreed it should.

¹ See *Woburn Journal* for April 2, 1870 and April 1, May 6, June 10, July 11, December 9, 1871.

CHAPTER XV

WINCHESTER IN THE SEVENTIES

THE STORY OF THE WATER SYSTEM. THE BANKS

By 1870 Winchester had increased its population to 2,646. Its industries were prosperous. There were three tanning or leather-working plants in the town: the Thompson tannery near the railway station, the Alexander Mosely tannery at Swanton Street — since become that of Loring and Avery and then of Beggs and Cobb — and a small leather-working shop on Walnut Street, of which Warren Johnson was the proprietor. John H. Bacon was still making felt near the Mystic Station,¹ and the Whitney Machine Company was making a variety of complicated machinery in the mill at the center, where Edward Converse had built his dam. In the same building Charles Porter made knives and curriers' tools. Cowdery, Cobb and Nichols were making piano cases and piano actions at the old Belknap privilege on Horn Pond Brook and the Cutters were still sawing mahogany at their mill lower down on the same stream. Zebadiah Abbott was cutting ivory for piano keys in a little shop at the center, and Alexis C. Cutting, a newcomer to Winchester, had established a thriving business in lumber and in hemlock bark, which he sold to the tanneries, with a yard near the railway tracks on what is now Manchester Field. James H. Winn had just established (1868) a factory for manufacturing hands for watches, by a patented mechanical process, on the site of the old Jeduthan Richardson mill off Washington Street north of Forest Street. That factory, the only one of its kind in the country, is still in the hands of his sons.

Stores were increasing in number. George P. Brown had succeeded to the drug store formerly conducted by David Youngman and then by Josiah Hovey, and he had likewise succeeded them as Town Clerk, which office for years was a kind of perquisite of the town apothecary. He was the postmaster, too, and the post office

¹ Now the Wedgemere Station.

was located in his store in the Lyceum Building until its removal in 1880 to the newly built Brown and Stanton block, which still stands on the corner of Mt. Vernon and Main streets where Dr. Ingalls and later Dr. Winsor had lived. Mr. Brown was one of the builders of this substantial business block; the other was Jacob H. Stanton, Jr., who a little before 1870 had opened a grocery store on the western side of the railway tracks.

Newcomers, men of substance and soon to become leading figures in the town, were continually moving to Winchester. Only a few can be mentioned, but there are some that cannot be overlooked. One was Emmons Hamlin, a member of the famous firm of Mason and Hamlin, the piano and organ builders. Another was James F. Dwinell, prosperous coffee merchant and founder of the Dwinell, Wright Company. A third was Moses A. Herrick, who was engaged in various enterprises but at this time was the treasurer of the iron works at Nashua, N. H. Highly successful in business, he built himself a handsome house on the hillside above Main Street, which was approached by the street that now bears his name. John T. Wilson, an able Boston lawyer, who was often called on to serve as Moderator for the town meetings — and in those days they often stood in need of being “moderated” — was a fourth. A few years later came the Pond brothers, Handel, Shepard and Preston. Handel Pond was a partner in the Ivers and Pond Piano Company. Shepard died before he was thirty, and Preston was for years the treasurer of the Dennison Manufacturing Company. All three brothers were musical, and Handel Pond was the sponsor of a number of concerts in Rangeley Hall — as the Back Log Club house was sometimes called — at which some distinguished artists appeared.

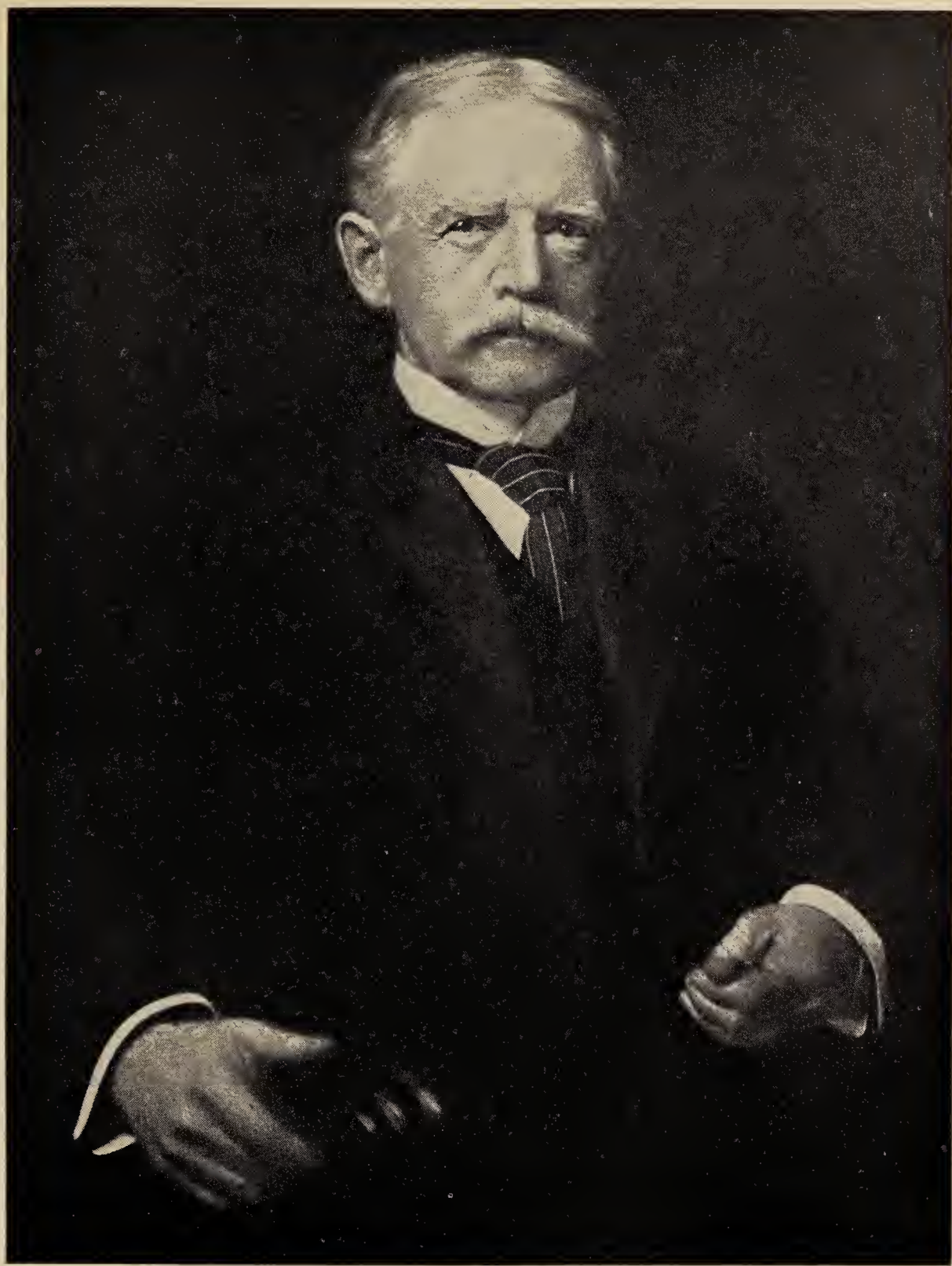
In the seventies J. Foxcroft Cole, the famous landscape painter, came to Winchester to live and built the first house on what is now Everett Avenue, near its junction with Bacon Street. From his studio came a score or two of charming pictures of Winchester scenery, painted on the shores of the Mystic Lakes, the banks of the Aberjona, or the higher land of the “old Symmes farm.” The natural beauty of Winchester has attracted many artists since that day. Edmund L. Garrett, another famous painter of landscapes, lived for some years in Lagrange Street; H. Dudley Murphy, eminent in both oils and water colors and especially perhaps for his

beautiful flower paintings, long had his studio and his home on Highland Avenue. W. H. W. Bicknell, one of America's foremost etchers, still (1936) lives in Arlington Street next to the grounds of the Country Club. Otis Philbrick, painter and teacher of art, is a Winchester resident. Gerrit Beneker and Ettore Caser are other well-known artists who have for a time made the town their home.

About 1877 a young lawyer, just married and admitted to the bar, Samuel J. Elder by name, chose Winchester to be his home, and in the next forty years became one of the town's most distinguished citizens and a leader at the Boston bar. He represented the town in the legislature and many Winchester citizens still remember his kindly, genial nature and his persuasive eloquence, which rarely failed in town meeting to win a majority for the causes he espoused. As his means increased he built the handsome house on Myopia Hill, which he called "Grey Rocks"; at this house Mr. Elder's contemporary at Yale, William H. Taft, President and Chief Justice of the United States, was often entertained. It is now (1936) occupied by his son-in-law, Rev. Howard J. Chidley, pastor of the Congregational Church.

A distinguished resident of Winchester in the eighties and early nineties was General John M. Corse. Few officers had a more brilliant Civil War career than he; he won laurels at Vicksburg, Chattanooga and in the Atlanta campaign during Sherman's march to the sea. His greatest exploit was the successful defence of Allatoona Pass in the latter campaign, when with a force very inferior in numbers he beat off one Confederate attack after another, until he was relieved by reënforcements. It was to General Corse on this occasion that Sherman sent his famous message "Hold the fort; I am coming," which became the refrain of a very popular gospel hymn. From 1886 to 1891, while he was living in Winchester, General Corse was postmaster of Boston — and a highly efficient one. He died on April 27, 1893, his fifty-eighth birthday, in the large house originally built and occupied by Mr. D. N. Skillings at Washington and Walnut streets, now the Parkway.

Perhaps a word should be said here of a familiar Winchester character of those days, "Uncle" Solomon Fletcher. Mr. Fletcher had been in his youth and middle life in the business of manufacturing shoes; he was foreman of S. S. Richardson's large shop in Woburn



SAMUEL J. ELDER



and later in business on his own account. During the last thirty years of his life he lived in Winchester. He was a bachelor and had rooms in the Richardson Block above Edmund Sanderson's store, and he was for some years sexton of the Congregational Church. Always notable for the neatness and taste of his dress he was of a most social disposition and a welcome guest at all Winchester parties. He was extremely fond of children, and was continually taking groups of them horseback riding, boat riding on Wedge Pond, or, packed into a barge drawn by a pair of horses, on little picnics he had arranged. During his last years he was somewhat in need of financial help, and an annual benefit was organized for him by some of the young men of the town, who loved him for the sweetness and generosity of his nature. One was held on February 16, 1880 in the Congregational Church — a largely attended lecture by Rev. Dr. March of Woburn on the Holy Land—and "Uncle" Solomon, smiling and happy, was present. Within a fortnight he had died, leaving a memory long green in Winchester hearts.

So Winchester continued to grow, and to pass from the status of a village to that of a town. The people began to demand some of the conveniences and refinements of town life, and first of all a municipal water supply. The matter was broached in the town meeting of November 8, 1870, when a committee of nine, of whom the selectmen, S. W. Twombly, John C. Mason and John T. Manny were three, was chosen to consider what might be done to introduce water into the town. The committee turned out to be an inharmonious body, and after "considering" the matter for a year was unable to bring in any effective report and asked to be discharged.¹

Another committee, this time of five men — O. R. Clark, D. N. Skillings, Moses A. Herrick, J. F. Dwinell and Thomas P. Ayer — was immediately appointed for the same purpose. This committee went capably to work, and was ready to report progress to the town meeting of March 25, 1872.² It had been suggested that Winchester might arrange to buy water either from Woburn or from Arlington where water works already existed, or else find a sufficient supply

¹ Woburn *Journal*, December 2, 1870.

² Town Records, Vol. II, page 48.

in Wedge and Winter Ponds. The committee went so far as to get an act passed by the legislature to enable it to take water from these ponds. It was also in negotiation with both Woburn and Arlington, but could get no definite terms from either town for supplying Winchester with water.¹

On August 3, the same five men, with Asa Fletcher substituted for Mr. Clark, who had moved out of town, were instructed by the town to bring in a printed report on the whole subject, with recommendations, estimates of cost and surveys of the various projects suggested. The committee lost no time. It called in engineers and contractors — Walter H. Sears of Boston and George H. Norman of Newport, R. I.— and took their views and their advice. Its report rejected Winter Pond as inadequate and Wedge Pond as too easily contaminated, argued in favor of an independent water supply instead of dependence on other towns, which might find themselves unable to furnish what Winchester needed, and sprung a bombshell on the town by advocating the creation of artificial reservoirs among the meadows and swamps that lay above the town on the high land we know today as the Middlesex Fells.²

The land in question lay in a long and rather narrow trough among the hills, which stretched roughly from the Stoneham line to the line now followed by the South Border road in the Fells. At its northern end lay Dyke's Meadow and the Long Meadow. Farther south, where the ground was hilly and rocky and the banks of the trough much more precipitous, was Turkey Swamp, so called from the wild turkeys which in olden times were numerous there. There was little or no open water to be seen, except in parts of Turkey Swamp in the spring, but the ground caught the rainfall from a considerable watershed in the rough country of the Fells and discharged a quantity of water through two brooks, Sawmill Brook at the northern end and Whitmore Brook at the southern end. The floor of this valley was underlain by rock and it was therefore well suited to serve as a storage reservoir for water — provided enough water could be found.

The engineers were sure enough water could be found. If a dam was built at either end of this long trough and the natural drainage

¹ Town Records, Vol. II, page 95.

² Woburn *Journal*, April 26, 1873. Town Records, Vol. II, page 124.

of the watershed to the east permitted to collect, they estimated that reservoirs would result that could furnish at least a million gallons a day throughout the year. It is not certain who first suggested this project. The report of the committee attributes it to "one of their number," modestly unnamed, but it was probably Mr. Herrick. The advantages of the plan, as the committee pointed out, were the wild and unsettled nature of the watershed, which made contamination unlikely, and the fact that the reservoirs would stand so high that almost every house in town could be served by gravity without any expense for pumping.

The report threw the town into a fever of controversy. Only recently divided into factions by the quarrel over the railway station, the people took sides with a renewed joy of combat. The conflict was waged not only in town meeting and in the press but in stores, on street corners and railway platforms, wherever a few citizens were gathered together. The opponents of the plan were scornful of it as a piece of pure craziness. Some of the older residents, members of families who had always lived here, could not contain themselves at the thought of taking water from Turkey Swamp! "There's no water there," declared N. A. Richardson in town meeting (his father had owned part of the land under discussion), "except a little in the spring. Build your dam, and I'll guarantee to walk across your 'reservoir' anywhere on the Fourth of July, and not go over the tops of my rubber boots!" Another old citizen¹ went up to the swamp and brought back to exhibit in the town meeting a glass jar of dark brown bog water in which several specimens of aquatic life squirmed unpleasantly. "That's what they want you to drink," he shouted.

The debates became acrimonious. The opposition called the committee names and got hot shots from Mr. Skillings in reply. It became a question whether the town would trust to the business sense of the committee members and the opinion of its expert advisors or listen to the voice of local tradition, which was that Turkey Swamp was good for nothing — not even for water. Mr. Skillings told the meeting that he would like nothing better than to be permitted to organize a private water company and take his water from this spot, if the town did not want to spend money on

¹ Deacon Luther Richardson.

it. In reply Mr. N. A. Richardson, under the pen name of "Viotor," argued that Winchester did not need town water anyway; its wells and springs were sufficient, and that if it was to have it, it should take from Woburn the pure and limpid waters of Horn Pond instead of the "muddy drippings of Turkey Swamp. . . . The committee has mistaken the quacking of a few water fowl for the real sentiment of the people."¹

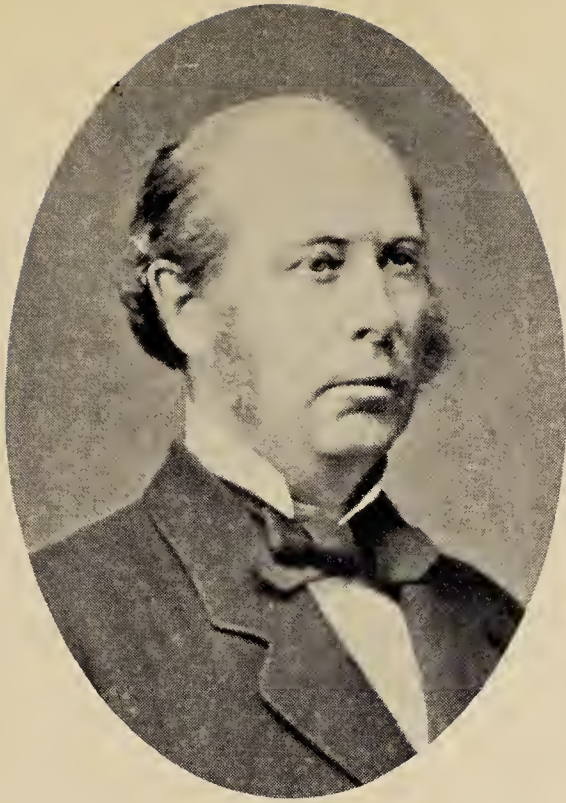
At the town meetings of June 30 and July 7, when these matters were furiously threshed out, the voters fell in line behind the committee. They accepted the special act of the legislature which the committee had procured, authorizing the taking of the swamp and meadow land for the purpose of a water supply; elected D. N. Skillings, M. A. Herrick and J. F. Dwinell Water Commissioners, and instructed them to go ahead with the plans. But on August 2 the other side had its innings. The commissioners were instructed not to make any contracts for the present and to confer with the town of Woburn to see what terms might be offered for taking water from that town. The commissioners were unable to agree on any terms they thought satisfactory — it is probable that they did not try very hard — and the work of construction was pushed forward at the northern end of the tract of land secured, the Long Meadow. The town had already, on July 7, voted to issue water bonds to the amount of \$100,000, a sum subsequently increased by \$25,000.

The land which was to be flooded had first to be cleared of the trees, stumps and underbrush, and a suitable surface for the floor of the reservoir had to be prepared. This work was done under the direction of Asa Fletcher, one of the Water Committee.² Most of the tree growth was small and scattered, but at the southern end of the meadow there was a stand of good-sized timber. Everything was cut down; the larger trees were cut up and sold for firewood, and the stumps, the small trees and the brush were piled and burned. The ashes and a certain amount of mud and muck were removed, and a surface nearly free from vegetation was obtained.

Meanwhile the dam was rising at the northern extremity of the meadows, where Sawmill Brook began its course down the hillside

¹ *Woburn Journal*, July 19, 1873.

² This was the man who, at his death some twenty years later, bequeathed to the town, the Asa Fletcher Fund, originally of some \$54,000, the income of which is devoted to the care of the poor of the town.



DAVID N. SKILLINGS



MOSES A. HERRICK



JAMES F. DWINELL

THE FIRST WATER BOARD



to the Aberjona. Mr. Sears, already mentioned, was the engineer in charge. He built a dam founded on solid ledge, with a central core of stonework set in cement, and a heavy wall of earth, water-proofed with a layer of clay. The face of the dam was curved; its width at the bottom was one hundred and thirty feet and at the top thirteen feet. The top of the dam was twenty-eight and one-half feet above the general level of the floor of the reservoir.

It had been hoped to finish the dam before winter came, but cold weather set in early in November and the completion of it had to be postponed till spring. However, the work was so far forward that the gate of the dam could be closed in December, and within six weeks thirty-five acres of the reservoir was flooded and the water stood twelve feet deep at the gatehouse, certainly far over the rubber boot tops of even the most confirmed sceptic. The dam was finally completed in September 1874. During the summer pipes had been laid in almost all the streets of the town, Mr. Norman of Newport, R. I. being the contractor.¹ On September 20 water was turned on; service has been uninterrupted since that day. Mr. William T. Dotten was the first superintendent of the "Highland Water Works" as they were originally called. He discharged the duties of this responsible post for no less than fifty years, and on his death in 1925 his son, Mr. Harry W. Dotten, was chosen to succeed him. Father and son, they have had charge of the water service ever since its inauguration.

The expectations of the Water Commissioners, Mr. Skillings, Mr. Herrick and Mr. Dwinell, were triumphantly confirmed. The supply of water proved to be ample; the level of the reservoir rose in 1874 to nineteen feet, and the water was soft and highly palatable. In the early years, some unpleasant taste and odor were occasionally noticed, and those who had objected to the use of this region for a reservoir were certain that "the muddy, swampy nature of the soil" beneath the water was responsible. They were mistaken; the taste was due to the growth of fresh water algae in the water under certain conditions of temperature, and almost all reservoirs are sometimes so affected. At first no one knew what to do about it, but the chemists long ago discovered a simple way of treating the water so as to prevent the growth of the algae, and there

¹ His daughter married Mr. Frederick H. Prince, then of Winchester, and was the mother of Norman Prince. See page 155.

are now no complaints about the quality of the water. The town owes a debt of gratitude to the far-sighted men who developed a system which furnishes water of such softness and purity at a cost far below that of most supplies.

As Winchester continued to grow it became apparent that sooner or later a larger amount of water would be needed. A new dam at the southern end of the natural trough was the obvious answer; that would flood the area long known as Turkey Swamp and more than double the amount of water available. The Water Commissioners were alert and persuasive. At the town meeting of November 20, 1880, in spite of obstruction from a party that still viewed Turkey Swamp with suspicion, they won the support of the voters for a motion to "purchase all the land needed for the South Reservoir and proceed to the building of the same."¹ Mr. Sears was again called in as engineer, the land was bought, ditched and partly cleared — it proved to be a much more troublesome job than the preparation of the North Reservoir — and the dam got under way. The construction was similar to that of the North Dam, but the money appropriated by the town was exhausted before more than half the necessary work was done.

So the project remained unfinished for several years while the North Reservoir continued to meet all demands upon it. By 1890, however, the Water Commissioners felt that the matter could be put off no longer, and they asked the March town meeting to permit them to issue \$60,000 worth of bonds to complete the work at the South Dam. Mr. Skillings was dead, but his son, D. Nelson Skillings, sat upon the Board, of which Mr. Herrick and Mr. Dwinell were still members. The meeting was chary of voting out so much money, and appointed instead a committee of fifteen to look into the situation. Like most large committees this one developed a great disharmony of view, but the majority, much influenced by Mr. John R. Freeman, an hydraulic engineer of distinction, who was one of the committee, recommended that no money be appropriated and no further work be done. Mr. Freeman held that the system would, before many years, be inadequate for the town even if completed, and thought it wiser to make arrangements to join the Metropolitan Water District at once.

¹ Town Records, Vol. III, page 238.

But a strong party of townspeople were far from satisfied with this report, and when at the adjourned town meeting of April 21 the subject was thrown upon the floor they were heard from at once.¹ One of those historic Winchester town meetings followed, in which floods of argument and oratory poured unabated over the puzzled voters. A group of die-hards, eloquently led by J. F. Dorsey, fought against the appropriation of any money, and counselled delay. The Water Board remained diplomatically in the background. Their case was ably presented by Henry A. Emerson, Arthur E. Whitney and Alfred S. Hall. Mr. Emerson was especially vivacious and earnest. His closing speech swept the meeting off its feet. It was "one of the grandest and most eloquent appeals the citizens ever listened to; the applause and stamping continued for some minutes in spite of Moderator Wilson's attempts to quiet it."² The vote was 193 to 14 to finish the work at the South Dam.

That was accordingly done; it was found advisable also to build a smaller dam at the foot of Turkey Swamp to separate the shallower waters of what today we call the Middle Reservoir. Originally this upper part of the flooded area was covered so shallowly that the quality of the water was far from satisfactory. The dam runs from the western shore of the reservoir to the forest-covered promontory called the Gem; a causeway traverses it. It has raised the Middle Reservoir to a depth of some twelve feet, the South Reservoir at the gate-house is about forty-two feet deep.

With the completion of these two dams, the water system was fully developed. Advantage had been taken of all the watershed in the Fells that is available. The supply has remained adequate, though the population served has increased from 4,861 in 1890 to almost or quite 14,000 today. If it should in the future increase far beyond 15,000, additional water would no doubt be needed. The town already has an emergency connection with the Metropolitan District water pipes in Medford and Stoneham, and could take water from that source if necessary. Meanwhile the question of a possible addition to our own independent supply has been carefully studied by a committee appointed by the town in 1930, of

¹ Town Records, Vol. III, page 238.

² Winchester *Star*, April 26, 1890.

which James W. Russell was chairman.¹ This committee reported that if the town preferred not to buy water of the Metropolitan District, by reason of the high rates charged, plenty of water could no doubt be had from driven wells on the Brooks estate, near the West Medford line.

The Winchester system, as it stands today, has cost the town \$1,100,183.74, of which about \$250,000 is chargeable to the original construction of the reservoirs. The three reservoirs, when full, contain almost a billion gallons of water; about half of this amount could safely be drawn down for use. The Middle Reservoir, much shallower than the other two, is simply for storage; water can be drawn from it into either the North or the South Reservoir, but no pipes are connected with it.²

In 1885 the town built a high service tank or reservoir near the North Reservoir to supply houses along Highland Avenue that stood so high that the pressure from the main reservoir was inadequate. A windmill was first used to pump the water into the high service standpipe, but an electric engine now does the work. In 1903 another high service tank was built on Andrews Hill to supply the houses on that and Myopia Hill. This was replaced by a larger and higher cement standpipe in 1912. A third high service tank was built near the southern end of Highland Avenue in 1929. In its original location it proved too conspicuous an object to please the taste of the residents in its vicinity, and it was accordingly removed to a spot nearer the South Reservoir, where it is shielded from view by the trees of the Fells.

Winchester has been fortunate in the character of the men who have served on its Water Board; they have always been citizens of business acumen and public spirit. Among them we find the names of Charles T. Main, one of the country's foremost engineers, Lewis Parkhurst, Henry C. Ordway, Nathan H. Taylor, George L. Huntress, Arthur E. Whitney, Edmund C. Sanderson, Charles E. Kendall, Harold K. Barrows and Clarence P. Whorf. Of late years the commissioners have carried out a systematic and

¹ See the committee's report printed in the report of the Water and Sewer Board for 1933.

² See a historical sketch of the Water Works by Mr. Edmund C. Sanderson in the report of the Board for 1933, and in the Journal of the New England Water Works Association, Vol. XLVIII, No. 3.



VIEW OF THE SOUTH AND MIDDLE RESERVOIRS



intelligent improvement of the shores of the reservoirs to develop their natural beauty, to conserve the supply of rainfall on the watershed and to purify and aerate the water that enters the reservoirs through the small brooks that flow into them. Mr. Whitney, chairman of the Board until 1918, Mr. Sanderson, chairman ever since that year, and Mr. Kendall, long a commissioner, were all active in this work. The large plantations of young evergreens, in which Mr. Kendall came to take a special interest, have now grown to a size that adds greatly to the attractiveness of the forest-covered banks of the three ponds. More Winchester people should visit the reservation; too few of them are acquainted with its beauty.

A long time ago the reservoirs were planted with black bass, and for a number of years residents of the town had a restricted privilege of casting an occasional fishing line into them. But it was found that the privilege was too much abused, particularly by out-of-town visitors to the Middlesex Fells, and fishing is no longer allowed, in accordance with rules made by the State Board of Health. For a number of years this was a sore subject with the local Isaak Waltons, and the matter was exhaustively ventilated in many a town meeting.

Although the existence of a municipal water supply seems naturally to connote a system of sewers, Winchester was without the latter convenience until 1893. In that year, the construction of the Metropolitan Sewer system north of Boston being under way, the town appointed D. W. Pratt, H. C. Miller and F. V. Wooster a committee to "consider and report on a system of sewerage for the town," to be connected with the lines of the Metropolitan system.¹ The necessary engineering work, supervised by Mr. Pratt, was completed that summer, and at the next annual meeting the money was appropriated for beginning the construction, which was promptly carried through according to plans made by E. W. Bowditch of Boston. The three gentlemen who had served as a committee on sewers were chosen as Sewer Commissioners and the system was in full operation by the fall of 1894. It has been extended by additional construction to the entire town. The Board of Sewer Commissioners which established the system

¹ Town Clerk's Report of the meeting of April 10, 1893, printed in the Town Reports.

was continued until 1906; in that year the board was abolished and its duties transferred to the Water Board, which has since then borne the title of the Water and Sewer Board.

It is an interesting fact that so careful and accurate were the surveys of Mr. D. W. Pratt and those of Mr. E. W. Bowditch, whose engineering firm built the first sewers, that in no case has it been necessary to change the levels originally established.

It was not until about 1905 that a systematic plan for the surface drainage of the streets of the town was begun and carried to effective completion by the Town Engineer, James Hinds. Some arrangements for the drainage of the center, which was constantly receiving the run-off of the streets which mounted the hillside east of Main and Washington streets, had much earlier been made, but the disposal of surface water according to modern practice dates only from 1905, when work was begun on Bacon, Main, Washington and Church streets.

The first bank to open its doors in Winchester was the Savings Bank, which was chartered on March 3, 1871. The original incorporators were David N. Skillings, John T. Manny, A. K. P. Joy, Stephen Cutter and Henry B. Metcalf. It is recorded that some of the more cautious townsfolk regarded the bank as a very risky enterprise, and predicted that it would never accumulate as much as \$10,000 in deposits. But though it began in a humble way in a single room in the old Wakefield house near the railroad crossing, it had within a year accepted about four times that amount, and was a strongly going institution. Mr. Skillings was its first president and Mr. Manny its first treasurer. After Mr. Skillings' death Thomas P. Ayer became its president; Mr. Manny remained the treasurer for many years.

By 1880 the savings bank was obliged to look for larger and more convenient quarters. It removed to rooms in the Brown and Stanton Block, which it occupied until 1892, when its highly solvent condition enabled it to build a home for itself — the brick bank building which still stands at the corner of Mt. Vernon Street and Winchester Place. The bank's deposits and resources have steadily increased since it was established. Today (1935) the deposits amount to \$4,729,617.45. The presidents — since Mr. Ayer's

death in 1893 — have been James F. Dwinell, Stephen Thompson, Alonzo P. Weeks, David N. Skillings, Jr., Harry C. Sanborn and H. Wadsworth Hight. The treasurers since Mr. Manny retired in 1887 have been D. N. Skillings, Jr., Charles E. Redfern, Eben Caldwell and William E. Priest.

In order that the history of banking in Winchester may be presented as a unity, the story of the other banks of the town, past and present, will be given here. The second to be opened was the Coöperative Bank, which was incorporated in November 1893. Among the original petitioners for a charter were Lewis Parkhurst, John Challis, George A. Fernald, Edward H. Stone, John Lynch, Lewis C. Pattee, Howard D. Nash and N. T. Appolonio. Mr. Pattee was the first president and Thomas B. Cotter the first treasurer. Like the Savings Bank, the Coöperative began modestly, in a small room in the Lyceum Building. The growth in its business soon obliged it to move to the Lane Building on lower Church Street. In 1929 the Coöperative Bank was sufficiently prosperous to undertake the erection of its own building.

The site selected was the lot at the foot of Vine Street where it enters Church Street. It was on this lot that the little wooden house stood which was the first public building erected by the infant town of Winchester. It had housed for many years the single fire engine that was the entire fire department of the town, and in the room on the second floor the early boards of selectmen had their office. Still later it was used as a shop by the superintendent of the Water Works. The new building which rose on this lot was completed and ready for business in November 1931. It was designed by Mr. Edward R. Wait, an architect who was himself a citizen of Winchester, and it is a dignified and almost monumental edifice in the modern style, in which much use has been made of the newer building materials for structural and decorative purposes, and of the latest devices in actinic glass for diffusing the light equally through the large banking room.

The bank has from the first been owned and conducted by Winchester people; some ninety-eight per cent of its loans are on Winchester property, and it is a sound and well-managed local institution. In 1935 its assets amounted to over \$3,000,000. It has had three presidents: Mr. Pattee served until 1900; Mr. Howard

D. Nash until 1927, and Mr. John Challis since that year. Its treasurers have been Thomas B. Cotter, Thomas S. Spurr, George E. Pratt, Raymond Merrill, Herbert E. Stone, W. G. Packard, Walter S. Wadsworth and Ernest R. Eustis — the latter since 1921.

The first commercial bank to be established in Winchester was the Middlesex National. The articles of association for this institution were signed April 28, 1897 by Lewis Parkhurst, Samuel J. Elder, Frank A. Cutting, James W. Russell, Charles E. Barrett and L. H. W. Vaupel. Mr. Parkhurst was elected president and Mr. Barrett cashier. The bank opened rooms in the building on Main Street which had formerly been the house of Deacon Benjamin F. Thompson — or rather in the story beneath that house, which had been raised to permit the use of the site for business purposes.

The bank was highly successful both under Mr. Parkhurst's presidency and that of Mr. Cutting who succeeded him. The stock was almost entirely owned by Winchester people. Its original capital was \$50,000. In 1913 the directors of the bank decided to surrender this charter and reorganize as the Winchester Trust Company in order to be able to do both a trust and a commercial business. At the same time they purchased land on Church Street opposite the head of Common Street, and built their own bank building there — the handsome brick structure with a high pillared portico in the classic style which still stands, a real ornament to the town. Mr. Edward R. Wait was the architect. Mr. Cutting was the first president of the Trust Company and Mr. Barrett its first treasurer. Mr. Cutting was in time succeeded, first by Frank L. Ripley, then by Ralph E. Joslin and then by William L. Parsons, who is now (1936) president. Mr. Barrett remained treasurer until failing health obliged him to resign in 1931, when G. Dwight Cabot was chosen to succeed him.

The Trust Company has been prosperous since its foundation, a notably sound and strong financial institution. In 1934 it reported commercial deposits of \$974,541.79, savings deposits of \$992,378.51 and a surplus and undivided profits of \$267,402.21. Its capital stock amounts to \$100,000.

In 1918 a number of Winchester gentlemen, believing that there was opportunity for a second commercial bank, took out a charter for the Winchester National Bank. Handsome banking

rooms were opened in February 1918 in the Lane Block at No. 7 Church Street. Edward S. Foster was president of the new bank and Edward A. Grosvenor cashier. The original directors were A. B. Allen, William H. Bowe, Felix J. Carr, W. F. Flanders, Edward S. Foster, William A. Kneeland, Jonas A. Laraway, F. J. O'Hara, Harris W. Richmond, H. L. Riddle, H. C. Rohrman, Edmund C. Sanderson, Dr. R. W. Sheehy, and E. Arthur Tutein — to whom James Hinds was presently added. The bank proved successful; in 1921 it doubled the size of its banking rooms by taking over the adjoining store, and in 1925 it purchased the entire block, of which it is still the owner.

Early in 1922 a reorganization of the bank became necessary, owing to the fact that misappropriation of its funds by the president, amounting to \$97,841, had been discovered.¹

The bank was, momentarily, adversely affected by this affair, but its solvency was never in doubt. E. Arthur Tutein, chosen president in Mr. Foster's place, with the assistance of his directors, got the bank securely on its feet again; in 1926 he was succeeded by William A. Kneeland, and it is enough to say of his conduct of affairs that not even the widespread banking troubles of 1933 menaced the solvency of the Winchester National Bank. From 1922 to 1931 Edward W. Nelson was cashier; Clarence J. McDavitt, Jr. followed him, and Leslie J. Scott at present holds that position. The deposits in 1935 amounted to more than \$1,000,000.

In 1878 Winchester was agitated by another railway project. The new road, christened the Mystic Valley Railroad, was to run out from Boston, through Somerville, Arlington, the west side of Winchester and Woburn, to North Woburn and Wilmington and perhaps to Chelmsford. It was to be of narrow gauge width, and it was planned still further to diminish the cost of construction by using, wherever possible, the old tow path of the Middlesex Canal as a roadbed.

The Railroad Commissioners, of whom Charles Francis Adams was then the chairman, seem from the first to have been dubious about the necessity and solvency of the project, and at first refused flatly to permit its incorporation,² but a sum of \$85,000 having

¹ *Winchester Star*, June 9, 1922, October 20, 1922.

² *Woburn Journal*, February 16, 1878.

been raised, and all the requirements of the law complied with, the incorporation was assented to on March 9.¹ Stephen Dow, a leading citizen of Woburn, was elected president, Samuel W. Twombly of Winchester vice-president, and John R. Carter of Woburn engineer.

On May 6, 1878, construction began at North Woburn, Mr. Twombly turning the first spadeful of earth.² Woburn business men were interested, as they always were, in any rail construction that might lead to lower freight rates on their leather products, and it was hoped by Winchester real estate owners that the road might lead to the profitable development of land on the West Side. Work continued for more than a year in Woburn, Somerville and Winchester. A mile of track was laid in Somerville and gravel trains ran over it. But the doubts of the Railroad Commissioners were justified. The project could not attract sufficient capital, and it died a lingering death.

The tracks of the Boston and Maine loop through North Woburn to Wilmington follow much of the route surveyed and graded for the Mystic Valley road. In Winchester the embankments for the viaduct that was to carry the rails across Winter Pond can still be seen, considerably washed away, and remains of the roadbed at the base of Horn Pond Mountain were long visible, though the building of the Woburn Parkway obliterated most of them.

During these years Winchester also witnessed the birth of the Myopia Club, one of the earliest and most famous outdoor clubs in the United States. A number of young men of no little social prominence in Boston, most of them Harvard graduates or undergraduates, organized the club for social and athletic purposes. The singular but melodious name is the physician's word, derived from the Greek, for the affliction of near-sightedness; it is said to have been suggested to the club from the fact that most of its members had to wear glasses! This was long before the days of golf, and tennis was only on the verge of introduction into the United States under the cumbrous name (also Greek) of sphairistike. The ath-

¹ *Woburn Journal*, March 16, 1878.

² *Woburn Journal*, May 11, 1878.

letic activities of the club consisted mainly of horseback riding until the brilliant idea of fox hunting presented itself to someone, and the Myopia Club became the Myopia Hunt Club.

Mr. D. N. Skillings's son-in-law, William D. Sanborn, who was himself a son of S. T. Sanborn and a resident of Winchester, was among the early members. Through him Mr. Skillings became interested in the Myopia Club, and offered to build for it a clubhouse and stables on land belonging to him at the top of the hill overlooking Mystic Lake — the hill that has ever since been called Myopia Hill. His offer was accepted, and the house built on one of the sightliest locations in the town. "A housekeeper and hostlers are kept on the place," reports the Winchester correspondent of the *Woburn Journal*, "and the house has facilities for keeping members over night and over week ends."¹

There are records of steeplechase races held by the club at Mystic Park, Somerville, and in May 1882 the arrival of twenty blooded foxhounds, imported from England, and kenneled at the clubhouse on Myopia Hill is chronicled.² The hounds, led by their "keepers or grooms" (the Winchester correspondent seems to have been in some doubt about the proper word), became familiar sights on the streets of the town.

It soon became apparent that Winchester was too near the city to offer enough good fox-hunting country, and in the next year (1883) the club gave up its house on Myopia Hill and removed, first to Clyde Park, Brookline, and then to Hamilton, where it still lives on prosperously, the progenitor of a thousand country clubs and famous as one of the leading polo playing clubs in the country. The fox-hunting experiment was rather early abandoned; American farmers are not so docile about having their lands ridden over as their English cousins. But golf, tennis and polo offer agreeable substitutes. Brief as was the club's stay in Winchester it has left memorials behind it, not only in Myopia Hill but in Myopia Road, which was the original driveway to its clubhouse. That building was bought for a residence by Mr. John Davis, but in later years it disappeared, to give place to the house erected there by Mr. Samuel Petts and now occupied by his son, Mr. Sanford F. Petts.

¹ *Woburn Journal*, July 30, 1880.

² *Woburn Journal*, May 19, 1882.

CHAPTER XVI

HISTORY OF THE CHURCHES IN WINCHESTER

THE history of the First Congregational Church, the first church to be organized in the town, has already been traced, down to the burning of the original meetinghouse in 1853.¹ The loss was a serious one for a church only thirteen years established, but plans were at once drawn for a larger and finer place of worship on the same site. Rev. Reuben T. Robinson, who had become pastor only the year before, and who was universally beloved, took the lead; the parish meeting of April 28, 1853, only eight days after the fire, appointed a building committee consisting of Nathan B. Johnson, B. F. Thompson, Harrison Parkér, Oliver R. Clark, S. B. White, Joseph Stone, Joseph Wyman, J. R. Bayley and Elmore Johnson, and by September 8 matters were so far advanced that the corner stone of the new church was laid, on which occasion Rev. Mr. Robinson preached a sermon. On the first of January 1854 the congregation was able to meet in the vestry which occupied the basement of the building, and on October 11, the church being completed, services of dedication were held. Rev. Mr. Robinson again preached the sermon, from the text, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts, and in this place, I will give peace." The clergymen of Woburn, Reading, South Reading and Malden also took part in the services.

The new church was considerably larger than the one that fire had destroyed. It was of frame construction, in a style derived from the Romanesque churches of Europe. After more than eighty years it still stands, solid and commanding, on its little eminence, surmounted by an extremely graceful spire, at the top of which gleams a golden cross. This cross occasioned no little discussion when it was first set in place; some of the old-fashioned Orthodox thought it savored too much of Catholic, or at least of liturgical

¹ See Chapters XI and XIII.

practice. But the building committee insisted that the cross of Christ could never be out of place on a Christian church, and fortunately, I think, carried their point.

By way of illustrating the cheapness of building eighty years ago, the entire cost of the new church, including organ, carpets, pews and furniture, was \$25,894, probably no more than a fifth of what it would cost today.

Rev. Mr. Robinson remained pastor of the church until 1871, when failing health obliged him to retire, to the unfeigned sorrow of his flock. He resigned on April 24; four months later to a day, he died. The church, by way of expressing its affection, erected at its own expense the handsome monument which stands over his grave in Wildwood Cemetery.

Four years before Mr. Robinson's death the parish bought from Harrison Parker the house on Main Street, where the minister had lived for some years, to be used as a parsonage. It so remained until the Junior High School building was erected upon this land in 1931.

The pastors of the church since 1871 have been Rev. Edwin C. Bissell (1871-1873), who, after leaving Winchester, was a missionary in Austria, and later professor of Hebrew at Hartford Theological Seminary; Rev. A. B. Dascomb (1873-1878); Rev. Charles R. Seymour (1879-1888); Rev. D. Augustine Newton (1889-1909); Rev. Frank W. Hodgdon (1911-1914); and Rev. Howard J. Chidley (1915-). Under their ministries the church has prospered; it has at present twelve hundred members and is one of the largest and strongest churches of the Congregational faith in Massachusetts.

The building erected in 1854 still stands, but important changes have been wrought in it. In 1884 it was somewhat remodeled and beautified by a number of memorial windows; in 1926 its western end was rebuilt, and a chancel, with choir stalls, a new organ and a marble communion table, added at a cost of \$60,000. The aspect of the auditorium was completely changed by this improvement, greatly to its advantage. At the same time a parish house, commodious and thoroughly modern in equipment and arrangement, was built at the rear of the church. It contains a beautiful chapel, the Ripley Memorial Chapel, named in memory

of Mr. Frank L. Ripley, whose widow gave the money for its construction, a large assembly hall, ladies parlors, kitchens and ample classrooms for the Sunday school. The architects who drew the plans for both chancel and parish house were Robert Coit and Allen and Collins of Boston.¹

An organization within the Congregational Church which deserves mention for its antiquity is the Ladies Western Missionary Society. This society is of equal age with the church itself, for it was founded in the same year — 1840. It approaches its centenary, still a vigorous and useful institution, interested mainly in the work of domestic missions.

The date of the first preaching service held by Baptists in Winchester is not of record; but at least as early as 1850 members of that denomination were holding public worship in Union Hall, over the S. S. Richardson building on Main Street. When Lyceum Hall was built — through the efforts of John A. Bolles, Josiah Hovey, Charles McIntire, Wyman Locke and H. K. Stanton — Baptists all — the services were transferred thither, and a dedicatory service was held in the hall on January 12, 1852, at which Dr. Rollin H. Neale preached the sermon. At the same time the Baptist Society was formed, with fourteen members, including the men named above and Benjamin Abrahams, Aaron D. Weld, Hiram Andrews, S. G. Grafton, Nathan Jaquith, Jr., Cyrus Bancroft, John Hopley, K. W. Baker and Horace P. Stone. Rev. N. A. Reed was invited to become the first minister and he began his work in Winchester in April.

The First Baptist Church was constituted with eighteen members on August 18, 1852; and public recognition services, with Mr. Reed as pastor, were held on September 2; Dr. Neale, who was one of the leading Baptist clergymen in New England, again delivered an address. Dr. T. F. Caldicott of Woburn preached the sermon, and the pastors of several Baptist churches from neighboring towns took part in the service.

¹ Materials for a much more extended history of the Congregational Church exist in MSS. preserved in the rooms of the Winchester Historical Society, most of which were printed in a series of some thirty articles in Vol. I of the Winchester Press. Rev. Leander Thompson, Abijah Thompson, David Youngman, Miss L. J. Sanderson and others prepared them.

The church continued to occupy Lyceum Hall for its public worship, prayer meetings and Sunday school until 1864. Under the pastorate of Rev. Henry Hinckley, whose faith and energy were notable, steps were taken to provide a church building for the society, which had greatly increased in membership, especially during the religious revival of 1858, to which reference has already been made. The lot on the corner of Washington and Mt. Vernon streets was purchased; and although those were the difficult and trying days of the Civil War, the society, under Mr. Hinckley's inspiring leadership, raised a sum of money sufficient to erect the commodious and attractive church building which stood for more than sixty years on that spot. The edifice, entirely free from debt, was dedicated with appropriate services on June 9, 1864. Just thirty years later, the building was improved by a re-decoration of the auditorium and the purchase of a new and larger organ, which was placed behind the pulpit instead of at the back of the church where the first organ had stood. The pastors of the church since its organization have been as follows:

Rev. N. A. Reed, 1852-1854.
Rev. E. B. Eddy, 1855-1860.
Rev. J. D. Messon, 1860-1861.
Rev. Henry Hinckley, 1862-1867.
Rev. S. J. Bronson, 1867-1870.
Rev. L. G. Barret, 1870-1874.
Rev. H. F. Barnes, 1874-1881.
Rev. J. F. Fielden, 1881-1892.
Rev. C. H. Wheeler, 1892-1894.
Rev. William E. Schliemann, 1894-1898.
Rev. Amos Harris, 1899.
Rev. Henry D. Hodge, 1899-1919.
Rev. Clifton H. Wolcott, 1920-1926.
Rev. Benjamin F. Browne, 1928.
Rev. Merritt Gregg, 1931-1933.
Rev. R. Mitchell Rushton, 1933-

During interims between pastorates the church has been served by Rev. Dr. Wood of Arlington, Rev. C. H. Moss of Malden, Rev. Herbert S. Johnson of the Warren Avenue Church, Boston, and Rev. J. W. Brougher, Jr. Under Rev. Mr. Fielden's pastorate

the Baptist Church and Society, hitherto separate bodies, were consolidated, and the First Baptist Church of Winchester was incorporated. Pew rentals were abolished and weekly voluntary offerings took their place.

In 1928 the need of a new, larger and better equipped church building having long been felt, the Baptists of Winchester undertook to raise the money for an edifice that should include not only an auditorium and vestry rooms, but a modern and commodious parish house as well. The beautiful stone structure which stands today on the original lot at the corner of Mt. Vernon Street, a monument to the faith, devotion and sacrifice of the church members, was the result. This building cost in the neighborhood of \$200,000. Within and without it is designed with taste and judgment. In its tower there is a chime of bells, the music of which floats far and wide through the center of the town. An attractive and well-planned home for the second oldest religious body in Winchester, it is also a notable addition to the beauty of the town.

The Winchester Unitarian Society may be said to have had its beginnings in a Sunday school organized in 1855 by Edwin A. Wadleigh, and continued for some four years under his superintendence. The school met in various places — the Mystic Schoolhouse, Livingstone Hall, and the home of Mrs. Sharon on Main Street. Some fifty or sixty children attended, many of them pupils in the Industrial School of which Mrs. Sharon was then the matron.¹ During these years there were also occasional preaching services at the Mystic School on Sunday afternoon or evening, which were addressed by Unitarian ministers from the surrounding towns — Rev. Charles Brooks of Medford, Rev. J. F. W. Ware of Cambridge, Rev. Mr. Marsters of Woburn and Dr. Frothingham of Boston among them.

The movement to establish a living Unitarian church in Winchester was coincident with the arrival in the town of Dr. Frederick Winsor. Dr. Winsor was an earnest Unitarian, and the stimulus of his energy was all that was needed to awaken the spirit of a rather numerous body of citizens, who were of his mind in matters of religion. On Sunday, November 19, 1865, about twenty-five men and women met in his parlor to listen to a sermon by a visiting

¹ See page 187.

clergyman, Rev. A. B. Calthrop; a preaching service in Lyceum Hall a week later attracted an audience of eighty, and a few days later articles of association, forming the Winchester Unitarian Society, were drawn up and signed by Dr. Winsor, Charles J. Bishop, Charles P. Curtis, Jr., Edward Shattuck, F. O. Prince, Edwin A. Wadleigh, Joseph Goddard, A. H. Field, G. W. Spurr, T. P. Ayer, Leonard Nutter, Joel Whitney, George P. Brown, F. W. Perry, William Pratt, S. F. Ham, Hosea Dunbar and C. J. Bishop, Jr.

At a meeting held at Dr. Winsor's on December 5, Mr. Bishop was chosen moderator, Mr. Curtis clerk and Dr. Winsor treasurer.

Services were held in Lyceum Hall, beginning on December 3. In May the young society called Rev. Richard Metcalf of Providence, R. I. to be its minister, and on June 14, 1866 Mr. Metcalf was duly installed as pastor. The sermon on this occasion was delivered by Rev. James Freeman Clarke, the distinguished minister of the Arlington Street Church in Boston. Mr. Metcalf was a graduate of Brown University, a man of great intellectual powers and a deep spiritual nature. During his fifteen years in Winchester he made a very strong impression on the people of the town. Unhappily his health was never robust. Twice before coming to Winchester he had been obliged to resign pastorates for that reason, and failing health cut short his service here in what should have been his prime. He died June 30, 1881, mourned by many beyond the circle to which he ministered.

By 1869 the society had so increased that the erection of a church building seemed possible and necessary. Articles of incorporation were taken out, a lot was purchased on Main Street just south of the present site of the new Junior High School. The corner stone of the church building was laid on August 25, 1869 at a service thus prettily described by one who was present:

"The service had a cozy, family look. The singing was chiefly by the Sunday school . . . the scholars stood in one corner round the organ, and the older people sat on the banks, the walls, or wherever they could find a stick of timber. The babies that could stand alone were trotting round near the minister, without being a bit in awe of him."¹

¹ E. A. Wadleigh in *Winchester Record*, Vol. II, page 154.

The church was completed and dedicated March 17, 1870. It was a substantial if not beautiful building, crowned with tower and spire at one corner. It contained seventy-two pews seating three hundred and eighty people, with room in the gallery for fourteen pews. The cost was \$23,000, most of which was generously subscribed in the beginning by the members and friends of the society. One gift of \$1,000 was made by Alexander Moseley who was not a resident of the town, but who owned the large tannery at Main and Swanton streets. The organ was the gift of Emmons Hamlin.

On the death of Rev. Mr. Metcalf he was succeeded by Rev. Theodore C. Williams of Roxbury. His pastorate was of brief duration, for in 1883 he was called to the important Church of All Souls in New York City. Rev. John L. Marsh was the next pastor, and later ministers have been Rev. Herbert H. Mott, Rev. Arthur W. Littlefield, Rev. William I. Lawrance, Rev. Joel Metcalf and Rev. George Hale Reed, who is the present pastor. Rev. Mr. Lawrance resigned in 1910 to become president of the Unitarian Sunday School Association. Rev. Mr. Metcalf was a nephew of the first minister, Rev. Richard Metcalf. He was distinguished not only as a clergyman but as one of the most active and learned amateur astronomers in the United States. He is credited with having discovered more than forty asteroids, several variable stars and at least three comets; some of these discoveries he made while living in Winchester, for he had a telescope erected on the roof of his house in Lawson Road. He also constructed several telescopes for his own amusement, one of which with a sixteen-inch glass found its way into the Harvard Observatory. What a magnificent hobby for a clergyman to ride!

Mr. Metcalf served as a chaplain with the United States army in France during the World War. He resigned his pastorate in Winchester to become one of a commission for Hungarian relief which was sent abroad in 1920; his special duties were to extend help and encouragement to the churches of the Unitarian faith in Transylvania. Subsequently he was pastor of a Unitarian church in Portland, Maine, where he died.

The original building of the Winchester church was pretty completely destroyed by fire November 16, 1897. The blow was heavy, but the society lost no time in preparing to rebuild. A



THE CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY



THE
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH



THE UNITARIAN CHURCH



THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

building committee was appointed at once; it consisted of Lewis Parkhurst, William B. French, Lewis C. Pattee, John L. Ayer and Daniel W. Pratt. The new church, which is the handsome building of stone with which all Winchester is familiar, was not erected on the old lot but on the land at the corner of Main Street and Mystic Valley Parkway where the house of Harrison Parker, Sr. formerly stood. It cost something more than \$40,000 and was ready for dedication on April 27, 1899.¹ A chime of bells given by Jere A. Downs and Elizabeth S. Downs in memory of their mother, Mrs. Elizabeth E. Downs, was placed in the tower of the church in 1924, and four years later the same donors replaced the four original bells by a full chime of eighteen bells, which was dedicated with impressive services on December 30, 1928.

In this attractive church home so beautifully placed, the Unitarians of Winchester have worshipped now for almost forty years. In 1929 the usefulness of the building was enlarged by the addition of a large and convenient parish house in architectural harmony with the church edifice. The parish house has been named the Metcalf Union in memory of the two pastors of that name who have served the church. It was dedicated on February 10, 1929.

It is fitting that mention should also be made of the Ladies' Friendly Society, which was organized by the women of the Unitarian Church only a few months after the society itself was formed in 1865, and has had an honorable and useful existence for more than seventy years. Its helpful charitable activities have extended far beyond the limits of the parish, to the benefit of the entire town.

The first seeds of a Methodist church organization in Winchester were planted by Mrs. John C. Mason and Mr. J. S. Owen, who called together a few like-minded persons in April 1871 and secured their support for preaching services to be held in Union Hall, which occupied the second story of the building on Main Street where Mr. Sanderson's store was located. The first of such services was held on Thursday, April 20, notices of it having been read the previous Sunday in the Congregational and Baptist churches. It was a stormy evening, but sixty were present in the

¹ From articles by E. A. Wadleigh in *Winchester Record*, Vol. I, page 150, and Arthur E. Whitney, *Winchester Star*.

congregation, and so much interest was manifested that weekly meetings for Methodists were at once arranged for. On June 13 the first class meeting was held at Mr. Mason's house in Winthrop Street, and it was conducted by Mr. Cyrus Houghton, affectionately called Father Houghton by the members of the small but devoted group who gathered round him.

During the winter of 1871-1872, prayer meetings and an occasional preaching service were held in Union Hall, and a Sunday school was organized, of which Mr. Robert M. Armstrong was the first superintendent. On February 21, a Methodist Episcopal Society was formally organized, with John C. Mason, G. E. Cobb, Robert M. Armstrong, J. S. Owen and Ferdinand Scudder as the Board of Stewards. The first quarterly conference of the new church was held two months later, Rev. Dr. David Sherman, the presiding elder, being present.

Two years passed before the church felt strong enough to ask for a settled pastor. In the meantime the pulpit had been filled by students from the Theological Seminary in Boston, and the congregation had been meeting, now in Union Hall, now in Lyceum Hall, and now in Adelphian Hall, for its worship. Rev. D. S. Cole was the first minister assigned to the Winchester church.

The steady growth of the society encouraged its members to make plans for their own church building. Mr. Mason, having the opportunity to buy the well-situated lot at the corner of Pleasant Street (now Mt. Vernon) and Converse Place, purchased it, and held it for the use of the church. Plans were drawn, money raised, and on October 20, 1875 the ground was broken for the new building, "Father" Houghton turning the first spadeful of earth. The labor of digging for the foundation was done by the men of the church "either in person or by proxy. A course of lectures paid for the foundation, and the expense of furnishing was met by the ladies, the Sunday school and Mr. J. C. Mason." The cost of the building was \$9,400, and when the subscriptions proved inadequate, Mr. Mason assumed the indebtedness and carried it until the church was able to liquidate it.¹

The new house of worship was dedicated on June 1, 1876, Rev. R. R. Meredith of Boston preaching the sermon. The building was

¹The Story of Methodism in Winchester, published by the church in 1897.

occupied by the Methodist Church for almost fifty years. It is the same which now stands at the corner of Converse Place, having been bought and remodelled to suit the purposes of the Winchester Laundry which occupies it for its executive offices.

The sale of the property occurred on November 19, 1920, the church having meanwhile bought the triangular lot at Church, Dix and School streets, long occupied by the handsome home of Lewis C. Pattee, for a new building. A planning committee of twenty members, of which Frank E. Crawford was the chairman and Edward I. Taylor the secretary, was constituted and the work of raising the necessary funds was begun. It was six years before the necessary amount was in hand, for the society determined to build a house of worship worthy of itself and of the town in which it should stand. During these years the services were held in Waterfield Hall.

The corner stone of the church building was laid October 7, 1923 by Bishop Edwin H. Hughes, so affectionately remembered by the Methodists of this part of the country. It was completed and dedicated on October 10, 1926, in the presence of Bishop William F. Anderson. The building is a dignified and skillfully proportioned meetinghouse of brick, in the authentic New England style, with a graceful steeple in which a clock is placed and a pillared portico. Hutchins and French were the architects; the cost was approximately \$150,000. Many of the fathers and mothers of Methodism in Winchester were remembered by memorial gifts — the bell was given by the descendants of John C. Mason and his wife, Lucinda Mason. The tower clock was the gift of Mrs. Kennedy, granddaughter of "Father and Mother" Houghton, and the organ is in memory of George E. Henry.

While the church was in process of construction, the Methodist Society sold the old parsonage on Myrtle Street and rebuilt the substantial brick stable on the Pattee estate into an attractive house for the resident pastor. On the occasion of the discharge of its mortgage indebtedness in 1928 the church voted to assume the name of the Crawford Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church in memory of Mrs. Winnifred L. Crawford, the wife of Mr. Frank E. Crawford, who had been an indispensable leader in the building of the church house.

The church, which began in the day of small things ("when we began our services," wrote Mrs. J. C. Mason in after years, "we knew of only five Methodist families in town") has now a membership of more than three hundred and a flourishing religious life. The following clergymen have served as its ministers:

Rev. D. S. Cole	Rev. H. P. Rankin
Rev. J. E. Judd	Rev. Vincent Ravi
Rev. G. H. Cheney	Rev. J. R. Chaffee
Rev. W. H. Meredith	Rev. C. W. Blakett
Rev. J. M. Leonard	Rev. L. W. Adams
Rev. J. H. Mansfield	Rev. O. C. Poland
Rev. G. H. Perkins	Rev. C. H. Davis
Rev. A. Dight	Rev. A. B. Gifford
Rev. C. E. Holmes	Rev. Hiram W. Hook
Rev. C. E. Spaulding	Rev. J. West Thompson
Rev. F. B. Harvey	Rev. George A. Butters
Rev. Edward Higgins	

Until 1874 there was no place of Roman Catholic worship in Winchester; members of that communion attended St. Charles's Church in Woburn. In that year a small chapel of frame construction was built on the site of the present Catholic church, and Mass was celebrated therein on Christmas Day by the Rev. Edward F. McClure, assistant at the Woburn church. This chapel was at first attached to the parish of St. Charles, but in 1876 Winchester was constituted the independent parish of St. Mary's, and Rev. Cornelius O'Connor was assigned to it as the first resident pastor. The chapel was replaced by a larger and handsomer edifice, and the church began to exhibit a remarkable growth.

Rev. Patrick J. Daley, the second pastor of St. Mary's (1882), added to the lands of the church by purchasing the lot at the corner of Washington and Eaton streets for a parochial residence, and while he was in Winchester the church building was further enlarged to its present proportions. Rev. William O'Brien followed Father Daley, and Rev. Henry J. Madden succeeded him in 1893. Until Father Madden's incumbency, St. Mary's Church had been an obvious construction of wood; but he not only renovated the church but built an outer wall of brick around the building, to the

great improvement of its appearance. Father Madden also purchased for the church the large Judkins estate on the western side of Washington Street, and used the old Judkins mansion as a private residence.

In 1906 Rev. Dr. Daniel J. Keleher succeeded Father Madden. He was a man of unusual ability, and Winchester had reason to regret his transfer to a more important church in Lowell after an incumbency of only three years. It is recalled that on his coming to this town a reception was given him, which was promoted by Rev. Mr. Suter of the Episcopal Church and attended by many of the principal citizens of the town — an exhibition of comity between Protestants and Catholics, still rare in those days.

Monsignor Keleher, as he now is, was followed by Rev. Nathaniel J. Merritt, who remained for twenty years the pastor of St. Mary's, a priest whose sturdy good sense and deeply spiritual character made him a great force for good in the community. Under his pastorate St. Mary's made great progress. A large and handsome rectory, sufficient for the accommodation of the pastor and the two assistants whom the growth of the parish had made necessary, was built on the crest of the high land on the Judkins estate, and completed in 1912. In the following year work began on St. Mary's Parochial School, which stands directly opposite the church building on Washington Street. It is a well-planned and attractive building of brick, the corner stone of which was laid by His Eminence, Cardinal O'Connell, Archbishop of Boston. The school today (1936) has three hundred and twenty-six pupils, some of them enrolled in St. Mary's High School, established in 1922. The teaching is carried on by fifteen Sisters of the teaching order of St. Joseph. Father Merritt remodelled the old Judkins mansion for their accommodation.

In 1931 a part of St. Mary's parish, including much of the northern part of the town on either side of Main Street, was set off with the adjoining section of Woburn to form a new parish — that of the Immaculate Conception. Of this new parish Rev. James F. Fitzsimmons was the first resident pastor. The church building stands on Sheridan Circle in Winchester, very near to the Woburn line.

Father Merritt died after some months of illness on February 5,

1934. He was succeeded by Rev. Aloysius F. Malone, who is the present pastor. Since he came to Winchester he has organized a flourishing Conference of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul to direct charitable work among the poor of the church, and he plans the erection of a new and modern convent building to take the place of the venerable Judkins mansion.

Like most other churches in Winchester, the Episcopalian church had as its forerunner a number of home services in which two or three devout persons gathered together to read the prayer-book and sing the hymns they loved. Some of these services are said to have been held as early as 1862. The first public service was in Harmony Hall (Brown and Stanton Block) on February 26, 1882, Rev. C. R. Parker of Cambridge officiating. The Diocesan Board of Missions shortly afterward accepted the growing enterprise as a mission, and assigned Rev. Charles M. Addison, the rector of St. John's, Arlington, to be missionary in charge. Afternoon services were held in the auditorium of the Methodist church, and a Sunday school and Ladies Guild were organized. Irving S. Palmer was the first warden of the infant mission, Charles Gratiot Thompson was the treasurer, Samuel W. McCall, vestryman, and Frank J. Wills, clerk.

In 1884 the little body of Episcopalians, believing that the services of the church could only be properly conducted in a building of their own, subscribed a sum sufficient for a small church. The land on which to place it was offered by Mr. D. Nelson Skillings; it was on Pleasant Street (now Mt. Vernon Street) beside the Aberjona River, at the foot of the elevation on which Mr. Skillings's house stood. The building, long since outgrown by the Episcopalians, is that now occupied by the Christian Science congregation. The first service was held in it January 25, 1885, and on May 29 of that year it was duly consecrated by Bishop Paddock, assisted by a number of other clergymen.

Rev. John W. Suter was the first rector, a gentleman whose learning, urbanity and cultivation made him from the first a highly respected and influential citizen of the town. He was a graduate of Harvard and of the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge. Winchester was his first parish, and when he resigned as its rector

in 1910 he took no other. The parish of the Epiphany, for such is its designation, flourished under his charge and before many years was in a position to consider the building of a larger and finer church. A large lot of land at the corner of Church and Central streets was bought as early as 1893, but ten years passed before building could be undertaken. On August 5, 1904, a committee, consisting of Charles W. Bradstreet, Alfred S. Higgins, Arthur H. Russell, W. M. Mason, H. J. Winde and the rector, was appointed to direct the construction. Warren and Smith of Boston were chosen as the architects; Mr. F. Patterson Smith, himself a resident of the town, drew the plans for the church and had charge of the building operations. The corner stone was laid on October 20, 1904, by Bishop Lawrence; it had been hoped that the Archbishop of Canterbury, then visiting in this country, would be present. Archbishop Davidson had been Bishop of Winchester before his elevation to the primacy of the English Church, and if he could have assisted in the laying of the stone the occasion would have been a memorable one. Unfortunately his plans did not permit him to come to Winchester on that day, but he sent a message of sincere regret to the rector, calling down the blessing of God upon the Church of the Epiphany.¹

The new building was completed within the year, and first services held there October 8, 1905. It is of brick with trimmings of antique stone, the pillars, which uphold the roof, of the same material. Such construction is not common, but the design is so sincere and so faithful to the canons of the best ecclesiastical architecture that the effect is charming. A very interesting detail of the building is the niche forming the credence, where the offertory plates are kept. Over the opening in the brick wall of the sanctuary is a stone finial which was originally a part of the ancient cathedral of Winchester, England. In the course of certain repairs it was removed from its place in the cathedral and presented by vote of the Dean and Chapter to the Episcopal church in Winchester, Massachusetts. The architect, Mr. Smith, has made discreet and skillful use of the venerable piece of stone, blending it with great taste with the modern stonework by which it is supported.

The church, which contains between three and four hundred

¹ Winchester *Star*, October 21, 1904.

sittings, was built at a cost to the parish of less than \$50,000, but a considerable number of gifts and memorials, including the altar, font, choir stalls, pulpit, organ and other furnishings, represent a large sum in addition. The glass of the several memorial windows is excellent, both in color and design, and the reredos is a beautiful piece of tapestry, something of a novelty in church furnishing. It is a memorial to Mr. Eben Blake Page, long a member of the church.

The architect's original plans called for a parish house and rectory, forming with the church building three sides of a square, open at the western end. The parish house was built in 1921, but the rectory has not yet been added. Neither has the imposing square tower over the entrance, which is part of the architect's plan, yet been erected.

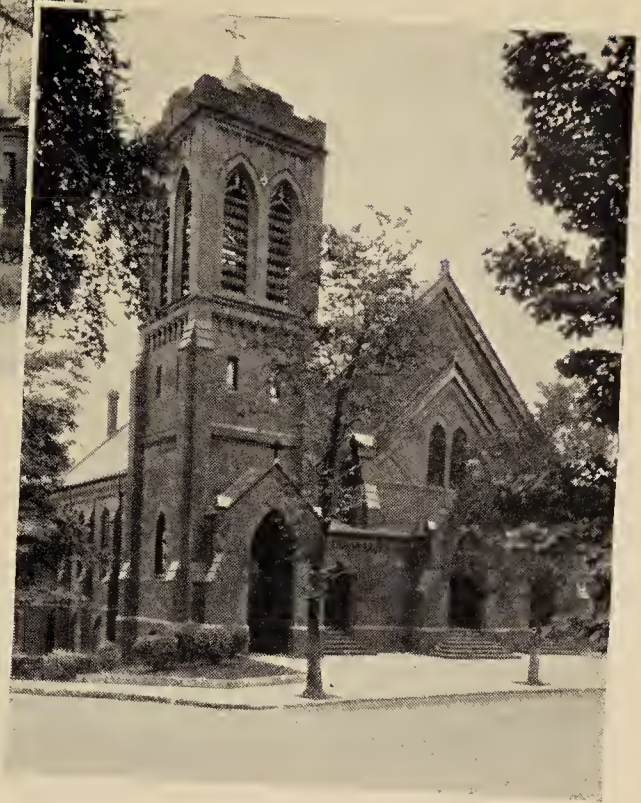
Mr. Suter remained rector, as I have said, until 1910. He was succeeded by Rev. Murray W. Dewart, who made a deep impression on both church and town. At the end of twelve years he was called to an important church in Baltimore, Maryland. While he was in Winchester, Rev. Mr. Dewart was chaplain of the First Field Artillery, M.V.M. which he accompanied to the Mexican border when it was ordered thither during the troubles with Villa and Huerta in 1914. On the entrance of the United States into the World War, this regiment was embodied as the 101st Field Artillery of the Twenty-Sixth or Yankee Division. Mr. Dewart went overseas with it as its chaplain, and rendered devoted service on the fields of France. Epiphany has had three rectors since Mr. Dewart, Rev. Allan Evans (1923), Rev. Truman Hemmingway (1927) and Rev. Dwight W. Hadley, the present incumbent (1931-).

On June 7, 1936 a most interesting service was held in the Church of the Epiphany, in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of Dr. Suter's ordination as a priest. The church was filled with the friends of the venerable clergyman. The ceremonial was impressive and a pleasant feature was the delivery of the sermon by Dr. Suter's son, John W. Suter, Jr.

The church building on Mt. Vernon Street abandoned by the Episcopalians in 1904 was not long without a tenant; it was taken over by the Society of the First Church of Christ Scientist, which had been organized in Winchester in 1900. For several years before



THE
CHRISTIAN SCIENCE
CHURCH



ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH



THE CRAWFORD
MEMORIAL METHODIST
CHURCH



THE NEW HOPE
BAPTIST CHURCH



THE SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

that, occasional services and lectures had been held in houses or halls, but after 1900 the Christian Scientists worshipped with regularity in the Town Hall. When the little church by the Aberjona fell vacant, its advantages as a church home conveniently located were at once apparent to the society, and the necessary arrangements having been made, it was occupied, and has ever since been occupied, by the followers of Mrs. Eddy. The society is vigorous and its services are well attended, many persons from adjacent towns being among the congregation. More than once the society has contemplated building a larger church on ground of its own, but the step has not yet been taken. It did, however, add a Sunday school room to the old church building in 1928, and as is the custom with churches of this denomination, it maintains a reading room, free to all, in which Christian Science literature is always to be found.

The Second Congregational Church as an organization dates from 1906, but it is the heir of a much older religious body, the Bethany Chapel and Sunday School. This very interesting institution was a community enterprise of great value, intended to serve the religious and neighborhood interests of the people at the north end of the town in the district known as the Highlands. This was the original home of the three Richardson brothers almost three hundred years ago. The center of the district may be taken to be the corner of Washington and Cross streets, near which the attractive building of the Second Congregational Church stands today. It is a mile or more from the center of the town, and has always preserved a certain individuality of its own. The devout men and women — particularly the women — of the Highlands were accustomed to have prayer meetings at one another's homes sixty years ago or more. As the members interested increased, a little Sunday school was formed which met in the waiting room of the Highlands railway station on Cross Street.

This house has an interesting history. When the question of a railway station for the convenience of the residents of this part of the town was agitated in the seventies, the Boston and Lowell road expressed its willingness to stop certain of its local trains there, but professed its inability to find the money for a station. Accordingly

Mr. Aaron C. Bell offered to build a house beside the tracks, the second floor of which should be used as a station — the tracks at this point being elevated on an embankment some twelve feet above the level of Cross Street. This he did. The building was occupied as a home by Mr. and Mrs. George W. Richardson (Mrs. Richardson was a daughter of Nathaniel A. Richardson, to whom frequent reference has been made), and Mr. Richardson acted as station agent.

Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Martha W. Rice were perhaps the leading spirits of the little praying circle already established, and she and her husband gladly offered the station room for the use of the Sunday school. The school, like the Bethany Society throughout its career, was quite unsectarian. Members of four or five religious communions met and coöperated with delightful friendliness, and preachers and teachers, Congregational, Baptist, Methodist and Episcopalian and Unitarian, visited the Highlands to serve the little community organization.

It was at a meeting at the home of Mrs. Rice January 10, 1881, that the Bethany Society took on final form and received its name. It continued to hold its services in Mr. Bell's railway station until 1886, when through the generosity of friends who had means and the sacrifice of those who had little, the money was raised for a chapel, which was erected on the lot west of the Washington School on Cross Street. The first sod was turned by Stephen Roberts, a highly respected colored man, born a slave, who had come North after the war with Nathaniel A. Richardson, whose servant he had been during Mr. Richardson's service as a purchasing agent for the United States army.

Thenceforth the Highland Bethany Society prospered. Its Sunday school under the direction of Deacon E. Lawrence Barnard became a model for other and larger schools in the town; its preaching services, conducted in turn by the ministers of the Winchester churches and by clergymen from outside as well, were well attended; its Ladies Bethany Society was active in all charitable work. It was the religious (but non-sectarian) and social heart of the Highlands community.

In 1906, circumstances, assisted by the energy of Rev. Charles A. S. Dwight, who was at the time assistant minister of the First

Congregational Church, led to the organization of the Bethany Chapel into an independent church of the Congregational denomination. A council presided over by Rev. Wolcott Calkins, formerly of Newton, constituted the new church and installed Mr. Dwight as its first pastor on March 13. Parts in the services were taken by many eminent clergymen — Rev. Daniel March, the venerable pastor of the Woburn church, Rev. George H. Gutterson, famous for his long missionary service in India, Rev. Joshua Coit, Rev. Stephen Norton, Rev. D. A. Newton of the First Church and others.

The Second Church has had a useful place in the religious life of the town for thirty years. Its ministers since Mr. Dwight have been Rev. P. Isaac Osborn, Rev. William Fryling and Rev. John E. Whitley. It was in 1926 that its present home, the attractive stone church at the corner of Washington Street and Kenwin Road, was built on or very near the site of the house Ezekiel Richardson built in 1642.

The Second, or New Hope Baptist Church, which is also located in the Highlands district, had its beginning in services for the colored people of Winchester, organized as early as 1893 by Rev. Oliver Barksdale, who had been a deacon in the Baptist Church of White Oak, Virginia, before moving to this town. These services were held in the vestry of the Congregational church for a time, and later in Waterfield Hall. In 1896 the meetings were recognized as a mission of the Baptist church, and shortly afterward the Second Baptist Church was formed with Rev. A. O. Smith as its first minister. The society received permission from the town to use the old Washington Schoolhouse on Cross Street — the original school built in 1851 — for its services, and in 1920 it bought the house from the town and spent a considerable sum of money in remodelling it in order to fit it more perfectly for religious use.

The pastors of the church since Mr. Smith have been Rev. Jacob Russell who, like Deacon Barksdale, was formerly connected with the White Oak Church in Virginia, Rev. Thomas Bruce (1897-1902), Rev. Charles H. Johnson (1903-1908) and Rev. William H. Smith, who is still the pastor. The church received the name New Hope Baptist Church in 1908.

Any account of the religious life of Winchester should include

mention of the Young Men's Christian Association, organized here in May 1890. Mr. Robert M. Armstrong, who was the general superintendent of the Young Men's Christian Association for Massachusetts, was instrumental in establishing an association in his own home town, and he was successful in arousing a real interest in the undertaking. Several citizens gave liberally, and the association, after a modest preliminary existence in rooms in White's Block, took larger quarters at 9 Pleasant (now Mt. Vernon) Street, where it had a game room, a reading room and a well-equipped gymnasium. It acquired a highly capable and likeable general secretary in Mr. Ernest S. Gay, and attracted more than a hundred boys and young men to its membership. A useful feature of its activities was the programme of talks, by men who had something valuable to say to young men, which Mr. Gay arranged every winter during his stay in Winchester. The ministers and churches of the town lent their hearty coöperation, and an auxiliary organization of ladies was active in its support. For fifteen years the Young Men's Christian Association was one of the institutions of the town. Mr. F. V. Wooster was its first president and he was succeeded in 1894 by Mr. Arthur W. Hale.

But Winchester is not an ideal location for such an association. It is a town of homes where few young people stand in need of organized means of recreation or are without the proper home influences. It proved unable to support permanently the Young Men's Christian Association. Mr. Gay was called to a larger opportunity at Lawrence and his departure snapped the mainspring of the Winchester "Y."

CHAPTER XVII

THE SCHOOLS OF WINCHESTER

WHEN the town of Winchester was incorporated, it inherited from Woburn two schoolhouses and from Medford one. Two of these, the house at Symmes Corner and the West Side School on Cambridge Street near Pond Street, were very small, and the West Side School was dilapidated into the bargain. The third was the school at the center which occupied a house of two stories at the corner of Church and Dix streets. Woburn at this time had the district system of school organization. This South Woburn School was not the property of the town but of "District No. 5." It had been built in 1843 by the citizens of the district, which comprised the greater part of what became the town of Winchester, and the cost of maintenance and instruction was paid by them.

After the incorporation of the town this schoolhouse was made over to the town by the voters of the district who owned it, for it was no part of the plans of the new town government to preserve the antiquated and slipshod district system. At the very first town meeting the voters chose a strong School Committee, Rev. Mr. Steele, pastor of the Congregational church, Frederick O. Prince and Charles Goddard, and appointed a committee to report on the best location for the new school buildings which by general agreement were necessary. The committee consisted of Oliver R. Clark, Joseph Stone, John H. Bacon, Charles Kimball and W. A. Dodge.¹

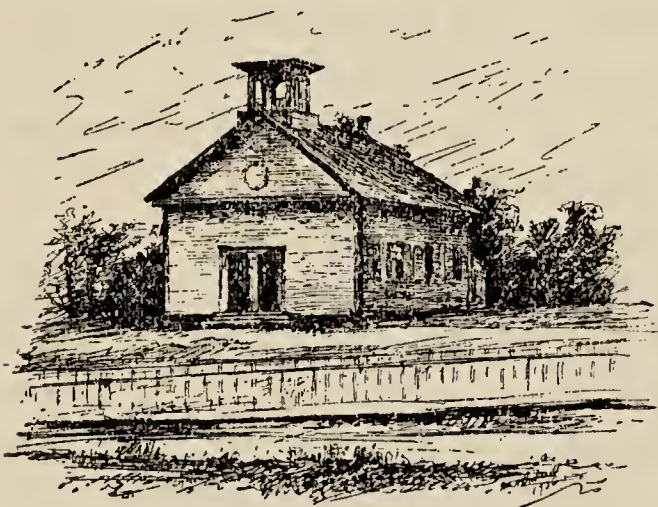
One of the causes for dissatisfaction with the old connection with Woburn had been that the arrangements for schooling were inadequate and the number of schoolhouses insufficient. The committee just named reported to a town meeting on August 19 that four new schoolhouses ought at once to be built. The house at the center and the Mystic School at Symmes Corner could be used, but the West Side School was badly located, almost on the town line, and it was not in proper condition to move. A new building

¹ Town Records, Vol. I, page 32.

to take its place, farther south on Cambridge Street, was required; of the other three new houses, one was recommended on High Street in the Andrews Hill district, another on Main Street beyond Cutter Village and a third on Washington Street "near Calvin Richardson's."

The town promptly voted to build all the houses recommended, appropriated \$4,000 to construct them, and to have a high school as well, and to fit up a room in the Center Schoolhouse for that purpose.¹ It had already voted to raise \$1,500 for the use of the schools during the first year of the town's existence.

Small as these sums seem today, they were generous for the time. In the first place, no town of less than four thousand population was obliged by law to keep a high school, but Winchester, with hardly more than a third of that population, was determined



THE OLD WYMAN SCHOOL

to have one. Four thousand dollars for new schools was a lot of money for a town with no money in its pocket, and a tax list of less than \$3,000 for all purposes. Fifteen hundred dollars was twice as much as Woburn had ever spent on the education of the school children in the southern end of the town. The enterprise and liberality of

Winchester in these early years is recorded in the tables prepared by the State Superintendent of Education. One of these tables ranked the towns of the state according to the amount of school appropriation in relation to the number of pupils in the schools; the other rated the towns with respect to the proportion of their taxable property spent on schools. In 1852 Winchester stood second among the three hundred and thirty-three towns in the first table, surpassed only by Brookline. In the second table it stood ninth.²

The four new schoolhouses were as like as peas in a pod, square solid little buildings with cupolas projecting from their roofs. One,

¹ Town Records, Vol. I, page 49.

² Report of School Committee for 1860, page 8.

named the Washington School, was on Cross Street a little way from Washington Street; another, called the Rumford,¹ stood just off Main Street on Salem Street; a third, the Hill School, was set up on High Street near its junction with Ridge Street; the fourth was on Cambridge Street near Deacon Marshall Wyman's and it was accordingly named the Wyman School. The town found it impossible to buy land for the Wyman School at what it thought a fair price, and for fifteen years the schoolhouse stood on land rented from the Reed family for some ten dollars a year. These were all primary schools; children old enough to attend the grammar school came down to the large center school on Church Street opposite the Common on which the name of Gifford School had been conferred.² The high school was kept in the upper rooms of this building.

Hardly had the first four new schoolhouses been completed, when it was found necessary to build two more, one for the primary pupils in the center of the village, and one to replace the old Mystic School at Symmes Corner, which was found small and inconvenient. The first named was placed on the lot at Washington and Myrtle streets, the other was built on Bacon Street a little way below Symmes Corner, where it or its successor was a familiar object for seventy years.

Each school — even the high school — had a single teacher. The high school, and usually the Gifford School, had men as masters; the primary schools were taught by women. The men were paid \$600 and later \$700 a year; the primary school-teachers received \$400.

The School Committee commanded from the first the services of some of the foremost men of the town. Dr. Chapin was a member for more than twelve years, and Edwin A. Wadleigh for many terms. Frederick O. Prince, Charles P. Curtis, Jr., Rev. Reuben T. Robinson, Rev. N. A. Reed, Oliver R. Clark, A. K. P. Joy, Dr. Winsor, Stephen A. Holt, Rev. Henry Hinckley, Rev. George Cooke, Joseph H. Tyler, Alfred S. Hall and others equally devoted gave valuable service to the town on this committee. In 1874 women were first chosen to membership; Mrs. Dr. Winsor, Mrs.

¹ In honor of Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford, Woburn's most famous native son.

² In honor of Hon. S. M. Gifford. See page 166.

Charles Pressey and Mrs. Edwin Lamson were elected in that year, the committee having been enlarged to six. After some years the practice of electing women as committeemen was discontinued and the committee reduced to three; but in 1922 it was resumed, and ever since the ladies have had their fair share in the conduct of Winchester's school system.

The early reports of the School Committee are interesting reading. Often very voluminous, they discuss at length and generally with great good sense the problems and the theories of education as it was then understood. They also go into much detail about the conduct of the several Winchester schools. There was no paid superintendent in those days; the committeemen divided the supervision of the different schools between them, visited them indefatigably, and held themselves personally responsible for the selection of teachers and the lines of teaching they offered. The reports are full of a frank personal criticism that must have been embarrassing. "Mr. — as a disciplinarian was signally deficient. He was wanting in energy, in uniformity and system." "Miss — was retained in the hope that with experience she would improve and become a successful teacher; this expectation has not been fully realized." "Miss — has failed to secure the affection of her pupils and the good-will of the parents." In justice it should be added that commendation of satisfactory teachers was equally specific and far more frequent.

Discipline was a problem of the first order, particularly in the Gifford School at the center. This school had a tradition none too good, inherited from the old district school which it succeeded. "Number Five" had been a troublesome school when it was still a part of the Woburn system. As in many a rural New England school of the time, there was a continual feud between the teacher and the larger boys, hobbledehoyes who had to be subdued by the strong hand of a master, else they were likely to toss him out of his own schoolhouse. The Woburn committee, in the years before the incorporation of Winchester, were constantly reporting the failure of teachers, especially the women teachers, to maintain order, and in 1850 it called the school "backward and unsatisfactory," and added that there had been so much disorder that many children had been removed from school by their parents.



THE HIGH SCHOOL

Things were never so bad as that after the Winchester School Committee took charge of it, but for a number of years the difficulty of getting a teacher who could control the school was the burden of the committee's song. "This school," one report says plaintively, "has a bad reputation for insubordination, and bids fair to maintain it."¹ Yet some teachers were found who could keep order as well as convey instruction; the tone of the school improved year by year; after the middle sixties we look in vain in the committee reports for the familiar lamentations over the Gifford School.

Another object of solicitude to the committee was the high school. There was a party in the town that held such a school was unnecessary in a place of the size of Winchester, and that its maintenance was a piece of costly ostentation. The committee had continually to do battle for its high school. Those early reports were loud in defending the high school as the crown of Winchester's educational system, and a proper object of pride to the citizenry. They were eloquent on the advantages of Greek and Latin studies, and the necessity of maintaining a classical department in the school, in order that Winchester youth might receive a preparation for college without leaving the town. This was the point where the battle raged hardest, for though the critics of the high school were never able to persuade the town to give it up, they did in 1862 carry in town meeting a resolve that "the classical department be abolished, and that it be conducted as an English High School."²

The committee yielded reluctantly, and for several years, Greek was omitted and Latin preserved only as an elective for a single year. But the weight of public opinion soon swung in the other direction, and by 1870 the classical studies were back in the curriculum.

The growth of the town had begun to make the first school accommodations inadequate before Winchester was ten years old. In 1857 the town built a two-story schoolhouse on Swanton Street near the corner of Washington and named it the Adams School, in honor, we are told, of John Quincy Adams. This school afforded room for the children of a rapidly growing part of the town — the

¹ School Committee report for 1859, page 15.

² Town Records, Vol. I, page 375.

Plains so-called; it contained both a primary and a grammar department.

In 1864 the Wyman Schoolhouse, which had long stood on rented ground, was moved to a lot bought by the town of Miss Patience Gardner, near the corner of Church and Cambridge streets on the southerly side of the former street.

By 1865 it was necessary to do something to give better accommodations to the high and grammar schools. The old schoolhouse on Church Street had become crowded; it was never well placed, for the lot was so small and so contracted by the rising ground behind it that there was nowhere for the children to go at recess time but into the street. The Gifford Grammar School had long since removed to the primary school building at Washington and Myrtle streets, but there was not enough room there for the increasing number of scholars in the two schools. The town therefore voted to build new houses for the two upper schools. For the high school it bought a lot on Church Street running through to Dix Street. This lot, which was adjacent to the site of Lieutenant James Converse's old house, built soon after 1650, stood well above the street. The building erected there served as a high school for nearly forty years; after that, its name changed to the Prince School, it was a West side grammar school for twenty years more. It was abandoned and pulled down when the school building programme of 1922-1924 was carried out.

The grammar school was housed in a new house built on the lot occupied by the Gifford School at Washington and Myrtle streets. The old building was moved to a site on Main Street next to that where the Unitarian church was to rise two or three years later. It took the name of Gifford School with it and became the primary school for the children of the center and much of the east side of the town. The new grammar school had no other name until after the death of Mr. Edwin A. Wadleigh in 1886, when his name was bestowed on it in recognition of his years of interest in and service to the schools of Winchester. The grammar school building cost the town \$15,000; the high school house was a little more expensive; it cost \$18,000. The old high school house was sold and removed to Vine Street. It has survived numerous alterations and improvements, and is today the funeral home of Kelley and

Hawes. On the lot where it stood there was built a house familiar to Winchester people for many years as a physician's residence. Dr. Daniel March, Jr. was the first to live there; for a long generation it has been the home of Dr. George N. P. Mead.

It may be added here that by 1876 the rapid increase in the number of children in the Adams School district required more school accommodation there. The old schoolhouse was abandoned, and a much larger one built farther west on Swanton Street. It was named the Chapin School for Dr. Alonzo Chapin who well deserved the honor for his years of devoted service to the Winchester schools. In 1879 another new school was built on Highland Avenue at Eaton Street, the small two-room house that still stands there. It was intended for the smaller primary scholars in that part of the town; a cozy, "homey" sort of school like the older Mystic. It has so won its way into the affections of the neighborhood that the parents would not listen to its discontinuance when that was proposed in 1923 in connection with the school-building programme of that year. It still remains, an "old-fashioned" but much beloved unit in the town's educational system.

It would be tiresome to readers not deeply interested in educational technique to describe the steps in the steady widening of the range and scope of the courses given in the Winchester schools during the last eighty years. But mention ought to be made of the advance made in 1871, when the committee drew up a wholly new curriculum for the schools into which many distinctly modern features were introduced. The "reform," if such it can be called, had its origin in a petition addressed to the School Committee by such leading townsmen as Dr. F. Winsor, Oliver R. Clark, A. K. P. Joy, Thomas P. Ayer, E. A. Brackett, S. H. Folsom, E. A. Wadleigh, Charles Pressey, H. B. Metcalf and many more. It read:

"The undersigned . . . respectfully petition for such a change in the course of study in the Public Schools as shall call for less time to be spent on arithmetic, descriptive geography, and abstract grammar, while more shall be devoted to the study and practice of the English language and to exercises adapted to train the perceptive and descriptive powers." The committee — Dr. Chapin, Rev. George Cooke and Mr. J. C. Johnson then comprised it — proved hospitable to the suggestion. The members went into con-

sultation with some of the petitioners, and with Mr. Patten, the high school principal, Mr. Sanborn of the grammar school, and Miss Senter and Miss Wadleigh of the lower grades, and emerged from these conferences with a plan of studies founded, it appears, on a recently adopted graded course of studies for the New Bedford schools, and full of what were then striking innovations in the way of broadening the base of instruction which had for so many years rested on little beyond the "three Rs." "The leading principles," said the committee, "are such as are fundamental to the preëminent success of the German schools, and are so obviously essential to successful school-work anywhere, that it is strange they have had such tardy recognition in New England. . . . It is beginning to be comprehended that our [New England] methods are not absolutely the best in the world!"¹ This year then may be taken as the dividing line between the old and the new in Winchester school methods; there are few systems in Massachusetts which were beforehand with our town in taking this important step in advance.

The School Committee of 1877 had one very curious matter to handle, some account of which may interest and perhaps amuse my readers. The principal of the grammar school at this time was a young man named J. Frank Baxter, an excellent teacher from all accounts, but a firm believer in spiritualism. It was his habit to devote many of his evenings to delivering addresses on spiritualism in Boston or the surrounding towns, and to conducting seances — for he fancied himself the possessor of mediumistic powers. To this the School Committee objected on the ground that he so far exhausted his energies by the practice as to interfere with his work as a teacher. They insisted he must give up his lectures and seances in term-time and Mr. Baxter agreed to do so. During the summer vacation, however, he was extremely active at Onset Bay, Lake Pleasant and elsewhere, in the activities forbidden during the school year.

Now there was living in the college town of Williamstown, Massachusetts, an eccentric negro who called himself Abe Bunter, and who had won a certain celebrity in that region by his ability to run head-on into a tough plank of wood set up on end, and to

¹ School Committee Report for 1872, pages 16, 17.

crack it with his skull. Abe was a well-known character about the streets of Williamstown and the college campus, and his name was not unfamiliar to people all over the state. One day in 1875 the newspaper carried the news of Abe Bunter's death; as in the case of Mark Twain, however, the report was "much exaggerated." The man had not died after all but the contradiction of the report had no such publicity as the report itself.

Mr. Baxter saw the piece about Abe's death; he missed the contradiction; and at one of his seances at Lake Pleasant, in August 1877, he received a long communication which purported to be from Bunter in the spirit world. One of his audience was so unkind as to rise in his place and declare in firm tones that Abe Bunter had not died as reported, and was very much alive at that moment. The episode got into the newspapers and the School Committee, thinking that matters had gone a little too far, dismissed Mr. Baxter from his school. He tried to spread the report that he owed the loss of his position to religious prejudice, and the committee, in defence of its action, gave up no small part of its annual report to an account of the case and the assertion that Mr. Baxter had been discharged not as a spiritualist, but as a person convicted of open fraud.¹ Mr. Charles E. Swett succeeded Mr. Baxter; an excellent teacher, whose services the town lost too early, since he accepted a position as purchasing agent for the Congregational church offices in Boston, though he remained until his death in 1925 a resident of Winchester.

By 1880, thirty years after its inauguration, the Winchester school system was firmly established and well conducted, according to the standards of the time. The teaching staff numbered nineteen, including two assistants at the high school and three at the grammar school; there were three teachers at the Chapin and two each at the Gifford and the Rumford. The school budget amounted to \$13,000. The high school was making steady progress, the old prejudice against it having disappeared, and under the conduct of Lewis Parkhurst, a young Dartmouth graduate who became its principal in 1886, it became one of the best schools in the state. After five years' service Mr. Parkhurst resigned to become connected with the publishing house of Ginn and Company, in which

¹ School Committee's Report for 1878.

he eventually became a principal partner. He continued to live in Winchester, however, and for half a century he has been a leading citizen of the town, distinguished by his generosity and public spirit. Under his successor, Edwin N. Lovering, who was headmaster for more than thirty years, the school continued to improve and expand, and to sustain its reputation among the high schools of the state. Subsequent headmasters — Charles L. Curtis, Edward E. Thompson, Clinton L. Farnham and Wade L. Grindle — have maintained the standards long ago established.

In 1882 the schools were at last placed under the executive direction of a superintendent; the details of management had got beyond the powers of the School Committee, busy people whose time was occupied with many other duties. Mr. B. F. Tweed, a former superintendent of schools in Charlestown, was the first to fill the office. He was followed by Dr. Ephraim Hunt (1888), who divided his time as superintendent between Winchester and Medford, and he in turn by Henry M. Wallradt, who also gave only a part of his time to the superintendency.

The first full-time occupant of the office was Robert C. Metcalf, already a resident of the town, who undertook the duties in 1902 after a lifetime of experience in school supervision, most of it spent in Boston. The school system felt the effects of his knowledge and ability at once, and though he was an elderly man when he assumed his duties, he gave the town seven years of invaluable service. His successors, all capable administrators and educational experts, have been Schuyler F. Herron (1909-1918), John F. Fausey (1918-1923) and James J. Quinn (1923-).

To describe with any attempt at fullness the broadening, enrichment and progressive improvement of the school curriculum during all these years would be to usurp a great amount of space with matter which could interest only the occasional reader. It is well to mention certain important advances in our educational system, however. Such were the appointment of a supervisor of music, Mr. J. C. Johnson, in 1872, the introduction of foreign languages (beginning with French) into the course of studies in the high school about the same time, the establishment of the first kindergarten in 1893, the addition of a department of commercial studies into the high school in 1903; the introduction of sloyd,

sewing and cooking classes in the lower schools a little earlier, and the systematic instruction in physical training which began in 1905. Another useful addition to the service which the schools can give to the town was the appointment of a school physician and medical inspector in 1907. Dr. Ralph Putnam was the first to fill this important post, and the excellent work he did in detecting and correcting physical defects among the children, in controlling epidemics of children's diseases, and in improving the standard of health among the pupils of our schools has been ably carried on by those who have succeeded him. Dental examination followed as a matter of course, and has proved equally valuable as a means of safeguarding the comfort and health of our young people.

The first kindergarten, as I have said, was started in 1893 in the Rumford School. Others were soon added in the Chapin and Gifford buildings. This was so radical an experiment in education in the eyes of many that it had a good deal of prejudice to overcome. Kindertartens appeared now in one school and now in another, and sometimes had to be given up on account of a lack of coöperation among parents who were not convinced of the value of what seemed to them mere folderol. But the School Committee persisted; at least one or two kindertartens were continuously maintained; and the "experiment" gradually made its way until all opposition melted before it. At the present time there are well-equipped kindertartens in all the primary school buildings, except at the Highland School where there is no room for one.

The growth of Winchester has been continuous, and at times rapid, ever since its incorporation. As a result the town has been constantly adding to its school buildings or erecting new ones, only to find after a few years that the pupils were again overflowing the accommodations prepared for them. In 1886 the little Wyman School had to be replaced by another much larger building, which was erected on a lot more centrally located on Church Street at Oxford Street. At this time the schoolhouse on Andrews Hill was finally abandoned, and arrangements made to transport what children still attended it to the new Wyman School. The Hill School had always been very small. It began in 1850 with only twenty pupils and the number had steadily declined until its enrollment was only four or five, and at many sessions no more than two or

three scholars presented themselves. It was a manifest waste of money and of a teacher's time to continue such a dying school.

In 1890 the Gifford School on Main Street was replaced by a new four-room building, which continued to bear the old name. In 1892 a new Rumford School was built at a cost of some \$10,000. Two years later the new Washington School followed. It was built on a lot on Cross Street adjoining that on which the old school stood. In 1900 the Mystic School on Bacon Street disappeared to make way for a new but not much larger building.

For a time this took care of the elementary schools; but the pressure on the high and grammar schools continued, until something simply had to be done about them both. At the town meeting of March 12, 1900 the town voted to issue bonds amounting to \$36,000 and to build with the money on the lot occupied by the Wadleigh School an eight-room grammar school building.¹ The building committee consisted of Rev. John W. Suter, William B. French, Samuel S. Symmes, Charles E. Corey, Bodwell S. Briggs, Daniel B. Badger and H. T. Dickson. The building was completed in the following year, school being held in the town hall while construction was going on. It was a substantial and attractive building of yellow brick, which served the town well until the erection of the junior high school. Vacant now (1936), it is still a useful piece of property, which may again be available for school purposes.

On June 9, 1902, just as the new Wadleigh School was finished, the town voted to raise \$110,000 to build a new high school. The site chosen was the land along the Mystic Valley Parkway between Main and Washington streets which Mrs. Nancy Symmes Howe had some years before bequeathed to the town with the expectation that it would be used for a public library building. The land was, according to tradition, that on which Edward Converse had planted his orchard; it was a sightly piece of ground rising high above the street and overlooking the Mill Pond and the buildings of the center. The town meeting in its wisdom decided that this lot was needed for a high school far more than for a library, and named as the committee to build the school Lewis Parkhurst, Daniel B. Badger, C. F. A. Currier, Charles E. Corey and Edwin N. Lovering. The building which shortly rose on this site, and was

¹ Town Records, Vol. IV, page 240.



THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

built within the appropriation, to the surprise of most Winchester citizens, is the dignified structure of gray brick and stone with which all Winchester is familiar. It contained ten classrooms, besides a gymnasium, large assembly hall, laboratories, offices, a room for art students, a lunch room and other appurtenances of a modern school. It was ample in size when built, but the school has continued relentlessly to grow ever since, and in 1932 by means of alterations within the old building and an addition of considerable size, which contains among other rooms a fine large assembly room and a well-equipped gymnasium, its capacity was very largely increased. Even so, with more than seven hundred pupils, the building begins to be crowded again.

By 1920 Winchester was again faced with another expensive school-building programme. This time it was the elementary schools, which were crowding the old buildings. The buildings were all of frame construction and unsafe from the modern point of view. A movement, begun by the School Committee, for the replacement of all these antiquated houses by larger, more substantial and more attractive buildings gained ground rapidly. There was opposition of course, for the plan was seen to be costly, and not all the voters could be convinced that it was necessary. The first step was taken at the town meeting of June 23, 1921, when a committee was appointed to present a comprehensive school-building programme to the town. Marcus B. May, James W. Blackham, Richard B. Derby, Arthur A. Kidder, Frederic S. Snyder, Mrs. Charles F. Dutch and Mrs. Alfred S. Higgins formed this committee. Their report called for the purchase or taking of land for the erection of four new elementary school buildings to take the place of the Wyman, Mystic, Gifford, Chapin, Rumford and Prince schools. At the meeting of April 23, 1902 the town voted 547 to 223 to enter on this ambitious plan. Land for the four buildings was purchased, for none of the new houses was to stand on land already occupied by a school. The Wyman School was to be placed farther down Church Street on the Shattuck estate nearly opposite Norwood Street. The Mystic-Gifford house was to stand on the land at the corner of Main Street and Madison Avenue. The new Rumford was to be located between Canal and Hemingway streets, and the Lincoln School, planned to supersede

the Chapin, was to be built on land between Chester and Florence streets, a little way from Washington Street. The Building Committee to have charge of the erection of all these houses was named by the moderator, F. Manley Ives. It consisted of James S. Allen, the chairman, Edward H. Kenerson, Ralph T. Hale, Harry C. Sanborn, and Mrs. George H. Root from the School Committee. Mrs. Root was succeeded in 1924 by Mrs. Maurice C. Tompkins.

The undertaking was so costly that the town was obliged to get from the legislature authority to borrow money beyond its debt limit. When the Building Committee made its final report on the completion of the programme in 1925 it placed the costs of land and buildings at \$554,764.38 — only \$11,000 above the original estimates made by the Planning Committee.¹ The town thus came into possession of four thoroughly modern elementary school buildings, attractive in design, substantial in construction, excellent in plan.² A year later the problem of the Washington Highland district was taken up and another first-rate building was added to the system. The old Washington School on Cross Street was abandoned and the new school was placed on Highland Avenue at the corner of Appalachian Road. The committee in charge of its erection was composed of James S. Allen, Walter H. Balcke, Charles R. Main, Ralph S. Vinal and John R. Maddocks. It was intended to abandon the little Highland School at the same time, but the School Committee, yielding to the protests of the people of the neighborhood, reconsidered their decision and the little school remains in use, the only surviving relic of the earlier group of schoolhouses.

Before the completion of the school in the Rumford district the town voted to give the new building the name of William J. Noonan, a native of Winchester and the son of Patrick Noonan, long in business in the town as a manufacturer of felt. This young man, of great attractiveness and promise, enlisted in the Marine Corps at the beginning of the war in 1917, served gallantly in France and died on the field during the battle of the Argonne October 9, 1918. At the dedication of the school in his honor on September 7,

¹ Report of Building Committee, Town Report of 1924, page 250.

² The architects were: Wyman School, Kilham, Hopkins and Greeley; Lincoln and Mystic Schools, Richie, Parsons and Taylor; William J. Noonan School, C. G. Loring. Derby and Robinson were the architects of the Washington School.

1924 the address was delivered by General Charles H. Cole, U.S.A.

One more enlargement of the school system was necessary, and in 1931 the town voted to undertake the construction of a new junior high school and an addition to the high school which had become sadly overcrowded. Room for the addition was made by the purchase of three house lots in the rear of the old building. The junior high school was placed on Main Street, nearly opposite the high school, on land occupied by the Congregational parsonage and one or two adjacent lots. The land ran through to the Mystic Valley Parkway and the part bordering that boulevard had to be bought from the Commonwealth or from the estate of Harrison Parker.

Construction of both buildings went on in 1931 and 1932 and was completed in time for the opening of the school term in September. The committee in charge included Robert M. Stone, Frank W. Howard, Mrs. Caroline S. Fitts, Frank W. Jones, James C. McCormick, Edward A. Tucker, and Harold V. Farnsworth. The entire cost for land and buildings was \$547,000.¹ It is unnecessary to speak of the beauty of the junior high school building which offers itself daily to the admiration of the people of Winchester. Ralph H. Doane was the architect, R. Clipston Sturgis designed the addition to the high school.

Winchester possesses today a highly efficient and well-administered school system. From its original dimensions — 7 teachers, about 300 pupils and school buildings valued at less than \$10,000 — it has expanded steadily and healthily, until in 1935 there were 107 teachers or supervisors, a pupil enrollment of 2,572 children and buildings and equipment valued at \$1,200,000. The town has had few apologies to make for its schools, and every reason to take pride in them.

A list of citizens who have given faithful and generous service to the town as members of the School Committee during the last forty years would be so long that it cannot be printed here; but especial mention is due to Professor Charles F. A. Currier, who bore a chief part in the enlargement of the curriculum and the modernization of teaching methods in the schools in the early years of this century. Professor Currier was one of the faculty of

¹Report of Building Committee, Town Reports of 1932, page 262.

the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, an authority on education, and a devoted laborer for the improvement of the Winchester schools. Others who gave long and capable service on the committee are Dr. Daniel March, Jr., Dr. Albert F. Blaisdell, George C. Coit, Marcus B. May, Frank F. Carpenter, Robert F. Guild, Edward A. Tucker, Dunbar F. Carpenter, Robert M. Stone, Joseph W. Butler, Arthur S. Harris, Mrs. George H. Root, Mrs. Maurice C. Tompkins, Mrs. Henry K. Spencer and Mrs. Harold V. Farnsworth.

This is perhaps an appropriate place to speak of the Mothers Association, which has performed a useful service in bringing together the mothers of children from all parts of Winchester and encouraging a spirit of friendliness and coöperation between them and the teachers in the elementary schools. The germ of this institution was a Mothers Club formed forty years ago among the women of the Congregational Church. Early in the present century Mrs. Harrison Parker 2d became president of this club and began, with clear vision and characteristic energy, to expand it into something wider and more serviceable. Mrs. Parker (who was Miss Fanny Fletcher) had always been interested in education. When she came with her mother from their home in Maine to live in Winchester, she kept for several years an excellent private school. After her marriage to Mr. Parker in 1875 that had to be abandoned, but she never failed to find time among her household duties and family cares to be active in the religious, charitable and educational affairs of the town. The flag pole on the playing field of the Junior High School was given to the school in her memory.

Mrs. Parker caused the Mothers Association to embrace women from every end of the town, conducted its affairs with tact and enthusiasm and opened her home ("Red Roof," as it was called) to all sorts of meetings of the organization. It came to be indispensable in its way, and even after the formation of a Parent-Teacher Association in Winchester in 1921, the Mothers Association continued to flourish and retain its individuality. Since Mrs. Parker's death in 1929 it has come to an agreement with the Parent-Teacher group by which remains the link between the mothers and the teachers in the grade schools, while the other organization performs a similar service for the High School and the Junior High. The Mothers Association now sponsors an annual scholarship

awarded to some promising graduate of the High School, who needs help in obtaining a college education. It was first awarded in 1933—to Richard K. Barksdale.

The Parent-Teacher Association in Winchester owes its inception to the efforts of Mrs. Edward C. Mason, who has long been prominent in the affairs of the national organization as editor of its official journal. Like the Mothers Association it has served a highly useful purpose in bringing together the parents of the school children and the teachers also share with them the responsibility of their development into worthy citizens of the future.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE STORY OF WINCHESTER'S PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS

FOR more than two hundred years, as I have several times pointed out, what is now the town of Winchester was a thoroughly rural community growing up at haphazard, with no attempt at planning or at beautification. It had no village green, that charming characteristic of so many New England towns, even for many years after its incorporation. Yet today it is notable among Massachusetts towns for the extent and attractiveness of its public parks and playgrounds — surely a tribute to the vision and the energy of the men who have been responsible for the change.

The first step was taken in 1867, when the land for the Common was acquired by the town. The land was part of the old Converse farm — the cornfield, by tradition. In the early days there were three Converse houses, the original one by the dam across the Aberjona, and two others, located, as nearly as we can tell, at the corner of Main and Church streets, and on Church Street just south of the spot where the Winchester Trust Company stands. Dying, Edward Converse left “all the land that lyeth common between the houses” to “ly common in perpetuity.” He meant it to be “common” among his heirs, not common for the whole community; but a considerable part of it did, by the hand of fate, become Common in the fullest sense of the word.

Eventually this land passed out of the hands of the Converses. Some of it, in course of time, was built upon; the Boston and Lowell laid its tracks through the middle of it; but a part still remained open and unused except as a piece of grazing ground for an occasional horse or cow, or a playground for the children — especially those who went to school at No. 5, directly across Church Street.

In 1867 the ownership of this plot lay between Stephen Cutter and S. S. Richardson. Its presence in the very heart of the town and its suitability for use as a village green led the selectmen of

the day — O. R. Clark, S. W. Twombly and John T. Manny — to put an article in the town warrant for the purchase of “the land lying between the railroad tracks and Church Street, and the laying out of the same as a public square.” The meeting was held August 6, 1867, and the proposal was hotly discussed. Many who might have favored it otherwise, objected because the price that was to be paid for the land — \$7,000 — seemed to them exorbitant. The sentiment was so closely divided, and the matter was taken so seriously that the check list of voters was used when it came to a decision. The town voted 88 to 62 to buy the land.¹

The Common, thus acquired, suffered neglect for some years. It remained unfenced and largely uncared for, useful mainly as a place for the boys to play ball. When the new railway station was built, pieces were cut from the east and south sides of the Common to make streets that gave access to the station — the present right-angled Common Street. Improvement of the green began in 1873, when the selectmen built a bandstand upon it (if that can be called an improvement). The local band performed there at irregular intervals for ten years or more, until on one Fourth of July eve the stand went up in flames; the undisciplined youth of the town were blamed for that, but the stand was not rebuilt.

In March 1875 the town voted \$750 to improve the Common;² it was graded, fresh loam was spread upon it, some planting done, and a granite curbing set in place around the plot. The cost of the work exceeded the appropriation, and private contributions from Mr. Skillings, Mr. Herrick and others made up the deficit. A year later \$1500 was voted for the same purpose³ and spent. The details are lacking — unless the money went for the rebuilding of Common Street, which was undertaken during the year.

In 1882 the Winchester Village Improvement Association was formed, and began at once to interest itself in the care and beautification of the town — the Common of course included. Mr. Abijah Thompson, 3d was the first president of the association, but Mr. S. W. Twombly, who became its president in 1884, was perhaps the most active spirit in its membership, unless he can

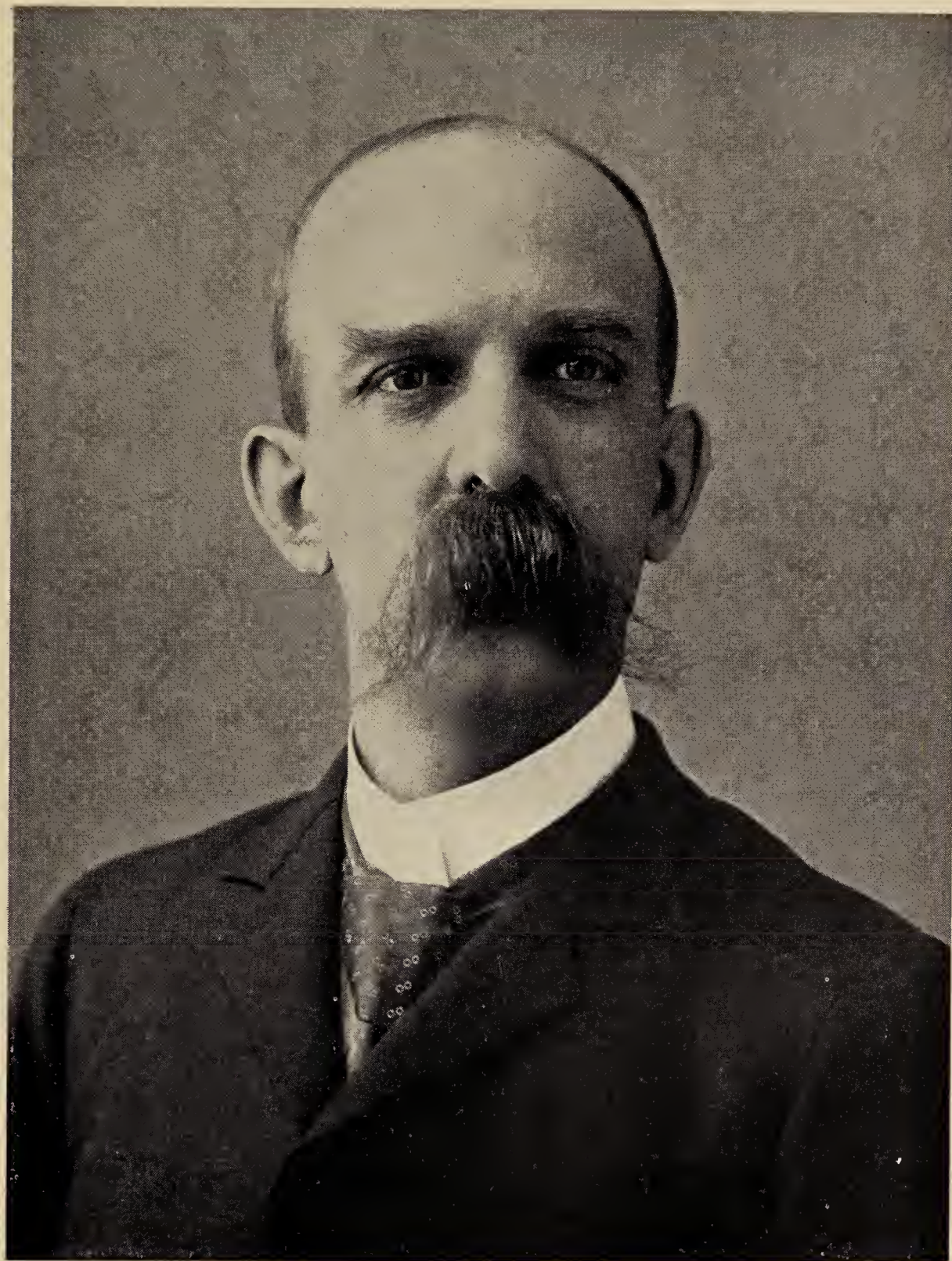
¹ Town Records, Vol. I, page 513.

² Town Records, Vol. II, page 268.

³ Town Records, Vol. II, page 3.

be said to have shared that distinction with Mr. Charles F. Lunt. The influence of the association was seen at the very next town meeting (1883) when the town voted to establish a Committee on the Common, and gave it \$700 to spend. The committee (S. W. Twombly, C. F. Lunt, D. N. Skillings, Jr., George D. Rand and Henry C. Miller) regraded the land, laid the original concrete walks across it, planted a variety of trees and shrubs and built a fountain supplied with a jet of water and basin of concrete. Three years later a more pretentious fountain took the place of the water jet. Mr. Lunt was instrumental in procuring this embellishment to the Common. It was paid for wholly by private subscription (mostly by members of the Village Improvement Association). The fountain, which sustained some severe local criticism, has disappeared in its original form; anyone who is curious to see the stone cherubs which were its most conspicuous feature will find them set up on the lawn of the house of Mr. Dotten, the superintendent of the water works beside the north reservoir.

The Improvement Association was helpful in influencing the town to take charge of certain small triangular plots at the junction of certain streets — at Wildwood and Fletcher streets, at Church and Dix streets and at Main and Washington streets (the Johnson plot). The latter piece of ground was, until 1886, occupied by an old and rather dilapidated house (once belonging to Deacon N. B. Johnson) and was something of an eyesore. The money to buy the old house was subscribed through the efforts of the association; it was pulled down and the plot turned over to the town. Properly curbed and trimmed, the little triangle is now as attractive as it was formerly unsightly. To the efforts of the association also we owe the establishment of a tradition of well-cared for lawns and private grounds, which has made Winchester one of the most attractive towns in the state, and the encouragement of tree-planting both by citizens and by the town itself. The Tree Committee of the town dates from 1884, and in 1896 the office of Tree Warden was created. Since the earlier date a great many thousand trees have been set out along the streets and in the public parks of the town with results that are apparent to all. The Improvement Association existed for some fifteen years, when, its work accomplished, it passed away.



FORREST C. MANCHESTER

The development of a park system in Winchester began in 1893 in connection with the establishment of the metropolitan park system, of which Charles Eliot was the inspiration and the first architect, and Charles Francis Adams the active motivating force. It was at this time that the Middlesex Fells, north of Boston, and the Blue Hills Reservation to the south of the city were acquired by the commission to be permanent open spaces, for the use and recreation of the people of the metropolitan area. It was part of the plan to connect these splendid natural parks by a chain of boulevards or parkways encircling Boston. The Middlesex Fells lay at the very door of Winchester, and one of the first parkways to be undertaken was the Mystic Valley Parkway from Massachusetts Avenue in Cambridge, along the shores of the Mystic River and Lakes, to Winchester and the Fells.

There happened to be living in Winchester at the time a man whose imagination was fired by the designs of Charles Eliot, and who had the vision to see how they could be expanded to the permanent beautification of Winchester. This man was Forrest C. Manchester. He was a young man — only thirty-four in 1893 — and he had not been very long a resident of the town. Born in Randolph, Vermont, he studied law and became a successful lawyer in Boston. From his first appearance in Winchester he became a man of influence, conspicuous for his interest in all the affairs of the town, and for a certain dynamic quality which impressed all who knew him.

The plans of the Metropolitan District Commission called for the construction of the Mystic Valley Parkway beside the course of the Aberjona River, much as it runs today. Between it and the railway tracks there was a wide extent of level land, open and tree-grown toward the south (though inclined to be marshy) but covered with unsightly constructions at the end nearest the center of the town. The railway freight yard was there, and the old Thompson tannery, now sold to and operated by Mr. Philip Waldmyer. There were coal pockets there belonging to Mr. Henry A. Emerson, and Mr. Cutting's lumber yards, as well as a row of tenement houses which Mr. Cutting owned. Looking at the collection of grimy buildings Mr. Manchester in his mind's eye saw them all swept away and a verdant and beautiful park and playground

where they stood, an emerald jewel pendant to the string of a completed parkway.

He was perhaps not the first to entertain this dream. There is extant a letter written by Mr. Edwin Ginn in 1888¹ in which he suggests the possibility of a park stretching from the railway station at Winchester to that at Wedgemere. But Mr. Manchester was certainly the first to take steps to realize the dream. He talked to everyone about it, on every occasion. He was persuasive in his enthusiasm, though many doubted his ability to bring his project to pass. He was in continual conference with the newly appointed Metropolitan Park Commission,² infecting its members with some of his absorbing interest in the plan, and he dealt also with the city government of Boston, for Boston had inherited from Charlestown, which it had annexed, water rights along the Aberjona, acquired when Charlestown began to take water from the Mystic Lakes. It was still doing so in 1893,³ though the water was already somewhat polluted, and Mr. Manchester presented his scheme as useful in removing one source of contamination.

His proposal was to raise \$150,000, to be contributed in approximately equal shares by the Park Commission, the city of Boston and the town of Winchester; to purchase and remove the commercial properties that encumbered the ground; and to improve the whole as a public playground and a natural park. The task was a difficult one; it required patience and diplomacy as well as enthusiasm, untiring persistence as well as careful planning. In November 1893 he induced the town at a special town meeting to create a board of park commissioners, of which, as a matter of course, he was made the chairman. He won the coöperation of the Metropolitan Commission and the Water Board of Boston, and received some promise of appropriations from both sources. So prepared he came before the March town meeting of 1894 to persuade Winchester to carry out its part of the bargain.

He had a large following of voters whom he had personally won to his support. But the opposition was numerous and determined too. Not much of it was furnished by the interests whose properties were to be taken. The railroad agreed to move its freight

¹ In the Collections of the Winchester Historical Society.

² Since become the Metropolitan District Commission.

³ The Mystic Lakes source was abandoned in 1898.

yards north of the center, if and when it could get suitable land there in exchange. The Waldmyer family was willing to sell its tannery, which was only occasionally profitable. Mr. Emerson and Mr. Cutting were public spirited enough to leave their present locations and go elsewhere. But there were many who saw the whole plan as a blow to the industries of Winchester. They believed it doubtful whether the concerns bought out would ever be reëstablished. They did not like the prospect of Winchester's becoming a residential suburb without prosperous industries of its own; and there was propaganda to persuade the workingmen of the town that the whole thing was a plan to throw them out of work and tax them for the luxury of a park that only the well-to-do wanted or would enjoy.

The town meeting was an extraordinary one. The veteran moderator, John T. Wilson, was in the chair. When the matter of the park appropriation was brought up, discussion at once grew hot. Mr. Manchester made his speech in support of a motion to appropriate \$50,000 for the purpose specified. His speech was a good one, but the opposition had all their guns out. They attacked the plan from every side, laughed at the idea that Boston would ever make good its share of the money required and wept for the poor man who would have to pay for this bit of "fancy-work." Patrick Holland declared that the project was already driving work out of town, since the tannery would be running "full time" if it were not for the uncertainty of the situation, and predicted that it would cost \$500,000 to prepare the place for the boys to play ball. The motion required a two-thirds vote, since it was for the appropriation of money. It did not get even a majority on the first vote; there were 105 in favor and 173 opposed.¹

But the number of voters was small — hardly a third of the electorate. The advocates of the park were sure that a larger meeting would reach a different conclusion. They moved to reconsider the vote just passed, and the meeting adjourned without voting on the reconsideration. The adjourned meeting on March 19 was the largest ever held in the town. Six hundred voters were present, and the meeting was tense with excitement. Mr. Manchester spoke again at length, explaining in every detail his plan

¹ Town Records, Vol. III, page 407.

and marshaling all his arguments for it. His supporters followed him. Mr. Lewis Parkhurst, Mr. N. A. Richardson, Mr. John H. Carter, Mr. S. C. Small and others made speeches; the opposition found its voice chiefly in the person of Mr. W. J. Daly. As the meeting prolonged itself, it was clear that the cause of the park was gaining. Speaker after speaker came to Mr. Manchester's aid. It was voted to reconsider the vote of the previous meeting. When the final vote on a motion for the appropriation of the sum of \$50,000 was taken it stood 490 ayes to 108 noes — a victory that was greeted with noisy applause.¹

In spite of this personal triumph of Mr. Manchester, the project was delayed for almost another twelve-month. The Metropolitan Park Commission had its money ready, but the Boston City Council refused to spend its \$65,000, as recommended by the Water Board; not until a new mayor and a new council came into office in 1895 was the order finally passed. In the meantime the option on the Waldmyer tannery expired, and could not be renewed. In order to save the situation, Mr. Edwin Ginn bought the property himself at a cost of \$35,000, to be turned over to the town if and when the tri-partite agreement went through. Mr. Ginn, always conspicuous for public spirit, had already deeded to the Metropolitan Park Commission the land at the southern end of the proposed park and playground, which he owned. This is the land still called Ginn Field, bordered by Bacon Street, the Mystic Valley Parkway and the railway tracks. For many years the old town pound stood upon it near the spot where the Aberjona flows under Bacon Street.

With the appropriation of Boston's share of the necessary money, the success of Mr. Manchester's labors was assured. It needs no argument today to prove the wisdom of his views. The beautiful playground (appropriately named for the man who created it) is an indispensable means of healthful and whole some recreation for the boys and girls of the town; and the long expanse of green below dotted with trees and traversed by the winding stream of the Aberjona gives Winchester a natural, unconventionalized park in the very center of the town which is the envy of many another community.²

¹ Town Records, Vol. III, page 411; *Winchester Star*, March 14, 1894.

² See the Park Commissioners' Report for 1897, in which there is a full account of the evolution of the playground.



THE SITE OF MANCHESTER FIELD IN 1890



MANCHESTER FIELD IN 1936

A final word must be added about Mr. Manchester, who did not long survive his great service to his fellow citizens. Always in delicate health and an untiring worker both in his profession and in the public service he wore himself out within five years. He was the first park commissioner of Winchester, and town counsel; he represented the town in the legislatures of 1896 and 1897. He was appointed to the Metropolitan Park Commission in 1898, but his final illness was already upon him. He died of tuberculosis in his childhood home at Randolph, Vermont, November 27, 1899. In 1931 a tardy memorial to him was set up on Manchester Field, a little way in from Waterfield Road. It consists of a large and shapely boulder bearing a bronze tablet on which is inscribed, after Mr. Manchester's name and an enumeration of his public offices, these words: "He was a loyal benefactor of the town; a man of vision and of a sacrificial spirit; a lover of children and of nature."

The preparation of the park and playground area thus acquired took a good deal of time. The removal of the railway freight yards was delayed for two years, while the directors of the road were looking about for a satisfactory piece of land for its purposes. It finally found one just beyond Swanton Street, and the tracks were removed thither. The tannery and the other old buildings were pulled down, but the ground required a great deal of filling and preparation in order to secure a well-drained and perfectly level surface. Some more filling was necessary at Ginn Field where the ground was marshy and subject to occasional overflow from the river. The Aberjona itself was dredged and its channel was made straighter and deeper by moving it somewhat to the eastward. This work was all undertaken by the Metropolitan Commission which had built the parkway; for the town had voted to lease the entire area to the commission for nine hundred and ninety-nine years. After the opening of Manchester Field with its fields for baseball, football and field hockey, and its quarter-mile running track, it was found desirable for the town to resume control of the playground in order to police it more efficiently, and to reserve it for the use of Winchester young people, which could hardly be done as long as the land was the property of the Metropolitan Commission. By friendly agreement, the town took back from the commission a lease of Manchester Field for ninety-nine years, and

is in the peculiar but apparently satisfactory position of occupying part of its own territory on lease from a party to which it has previously leased it!

Manchester Field is of course the arena on which all the more important exhibitions of out-door sports in Winchester take place. It is oftenest used by the boys and girls of the High School. There are played the baseball and football games between the school teams and their rivals from the neighboring towns. The contests with Arlington and Woburn are in the estimation of players and spectators the most significant of these, and draw the largest crowds; but all the games of both baseball and football in the Mystic Valley League to which Winchester formerly belonged and the Middlesex League of which it is now a member, have been well attended. On this field also are held the track and field meets in which the school takes part, and the field hockey games, which have of late years become so popular with athletically inclined girls. In this sport the Winchester girls have made an enviable record, as they have also in tennis. No town, unless it be Brookline, has sent so many school-girl tennis players of class into the annual competitions as Winchester.

In the summer there has usually been a ball club recruited from the young men of the town to occupy the field on Saturday afternoons. They have played under a variety of names. At their best in the twenties, under the management of George Leduc or of Edward P. McKenzie, they were known by the unpretentious name of the Town Team; but they have offered plenty of good clean sport to the enthusiasts of Winchester. There is usually also a Twilight League of less expert players, who perform on one or another of the town playgrounds at the evening hour which daylight saving has added to the midsummer day.

It had been part of the original plan to get rid of the old and none too sightly Whitney mill which stood across Walnut Street¹ from Manchester Field at the same time that the field was built. This mill — it was rather a well-equipped machine shop — occupied the very site of Edward Converse's old gristmill, erected in 1641, immediately below the bridge across the Aberjona at the

¹Now Waterfield Road.

center. The Boston Water Board was persuaded by Mr. Manchester to ask for enough money in addition to its other contributions to buy and remove the old building. But the Boston City Councillors refused to supply the amount necessary to meet Mr. Whitney's terms, and the project was abandoned. By 1911, however, the people of Winchester had become convinced of the advantage of improving the aspect of the center by the removal of the old machine shop. At the town meeting of June 12, 1911 it voted almost unanimously to purchase the Whitney property and to issue bonds to the amount of \$90,000¹ for that purpose. The purchase was made, Mr. Whitney removed his business to a new building on Main Street beyond the railway crossing, and the land was improved as we see it today. In this transaction Mr. Lewis Parkhurst was instrumental. Before it was certain that the town would take the property, he had taken an option on Mr. Whitney's land and mill; his rights were assigned to the town when it voted to pay Mr. Whitney's price.

In connection with the improvement of the Whitney land, the town wisely decided to replace the two old stone bridges crossing the Aberjona on Main Street and on Waterfield Road with new bridges, wider, more substantial and of more architectural pretensions. Herbert J. Kellaway, a well-known engineer and landscape architect, was employed to draw the plans and direct the work, which was carried out during the summer of 1914. The bridges are graceful round arches, built of concrete; the Main Street bridge, suitably named the Converse Bridge, carries a roadway seventy feet wide. At the same time the old dam which had seen two centuries and a half of service was torn down, and in its place was built the semi-circular dam just above the Converse Bridge, over the six steps of which the water of the Mill Pond pours itself in a picturesque cascade.

The park commissioners of Winchester like its water commissioners have been among its leading citizens, devoted to a high ideal of public service. D. N. Skillings, Jr. and Louis Goddu were Mr. Manchester's only colleagues. Among those who have since given time and enthusiasm to the office are J. F. Dorsey,

¹ Eighty-seven thousand dollars was the sum paid to Mr. Whitney. Town Records, Vol. V, page 139.

Nicholas T. Appolonio, Preston Pond, Charles A. Lane, Jere A. Downs, Edmund H. Garrett, F. F. Carpenter, Dr. Clarence E. Ordway and Maurice F. Brown. For the last twenty years Frederick C. Alexander and George T. Davidson have continuously been members of the board, and during the last ten years William S. Packer has been their colleague. For most of this time Mr. Davidson has been the able and devoted chairman of the board. The fact that the men named have had so extended a service and so harmonious an organization, has made it possible for the board to develop a consistent policy for the extension and improvement of the park system. That policy has had two chief aims: the establishment of as many playgrounds as possible in the different parts of the town, and the improvement and beautification of Winchester's many waterways, a natural feature of great attractiveness, which, through neglect, had become, until the turn of the century and later, a glaring illustration of lost opportunities.

First, then, the playgrounds. Of these there are now four. Leonard Field, on upper Washington Street, near Cross Street, was first laid out in 1915 on land purchased by the town. It was originally called the Highland Playground; its present name was bestowed upon it in 1920 in memory of Augustus M. Leonard, a Winchester young man who fell on the field of battle in France, two years earlier. The field, which was enlarged by the addition of the old Washington School lot when the new school was built in 1924, reaches all the way from Washington Street to the Aberjona River and contains more than seven acres. There are tennis courts and a baseball and football field upon it; and since the improvement of the course of the river — of which more will be said later — created a good-sized pond at the foot of the field, an artificial beach of sand has been built which offers excellent bathing to the children of the Highland district.

The land for the Palmer Street Playground at the lower end of Wedge Pond was bought by the town in 1917. The field, about half the size of the Leonard Playground, has been developed chiefly for tennis. There are eight courts in use and room to add several others. One of the park commissioners, Mr. William S. Packer, has interested himself deeply in the encouragement of tennis, and in teaching boys and girls to play the game well; with the result

that Winchester has had perhaps a larger number of accomplished tennis players among its school children than any other town in the state. Another bathing beach has been built where the playground borders on Wedge Pond, and is in constant use during the summer.

The Loring Avenue Playground dates from 1925. It is situated at the northern end of the town, not very far from the Leonard Field but on the opposite (or western) side of the river and the railway tracks. It contains a little less than four acres, has a very excellent playing surface on which there are tennis courts and a ball field, and like Leonard Field it is supplied with playground equipment and used for supervised play through the summer months. On many days considerably more than a hundred children are to be seen enjoying themselves there.

A fourth field not yet named and only lately completed is on made land at the upper end of Black Ball Pond, where for many years an unsightly town dump had been maintained. This little sheet of water had become so filled with sediment as to be only three or four feet deep. It was dredged to a depth of twelve feet, and the dredged material, placed on the foundation of the dump, was used to create the playing field and also a strip of park land along the western shore of the pond. The work was done partly by labor employed by the town with its own relief funds, but chiefly as a project of the Federal Emergency Relief organization. It was completed in 1935. The field boasts an excellent baseball diamond and football field.

The most remarkable service of the park commissioners to the town of Winchester has been in the far-reaching improvement of the Aberjona River and its tributary waters, so as to create new beauty in place of unsightliness and healthful conditions in place of unsanitary ones. The desirability of this work was apparent as long ago as 1900. The Aberjona in Winchester is a quiet, not to say sluggish, stream; its current, almost nonexistent at times, flows between banks that above the Mill Pond at the center are hardly above the water level. This characteristic has always been accentuated by the presence of the mill dam at the center, for the greater part of the natural descent between the Woburn line and the Mystic Lakes is confined to the fall at the dam; the upper part

of the river had no force sufficient to keep its own bed cleared. It overflowed continually in the spring and after heavy rainfalls, and much of the land along its course above the ponds at the center became water-logged marsh, an ideal breeding place for millions of mosquitoes. When to this was added the mill wastes and dye refuse of factories farther up the stream in Woburn, the deterioration of the placid meadow brook the forefathers knew was complete.

The Park Board began modestly by acquiring a small piece of land at the foot of Nelson Street on Judkins Pond, clearing it of old buildings and turning it into an attractive spot of green, connected with the center of the town by a footpath along the eastern shore of the pond, on land taken for the purpose. The war intervened to delay progress, and for some years thereafter the town was reluctant to undertake the supposedly expensive regeneration of the Aberjona valley which the Park Board proposed. But the project was not allowed to sleep. Mr. Herbert J. Kellaway, the engineer and landscape architect whose treatment of the Whitney mill property and the bridges at the center had recommended him to the confidence of the town, was employed to prepare a plan for the improvement of the ponds, the riverbanks and Horn Pond Brook — quite as much neglected as the river — and it was presented to the town meeting, but wisely not forced upon it. Persuasion went forward. The Board of Health and the Planning Board added their approval to the Park Board's plans. Mr. Lewis Parkhurst, always deeply interested in the park system since he had stood at Forrest Manchester's right hand in the creation of the original park and playing field in 1894, showed again his civic spirit by offering, after the town had purchased a strip of land on both sides of Horn Pond Brook, to clear the course of the brook which had for years been encumbered by refuse thrown into it by careless householders of the neighborhood. This he did, at a large expense to himself, in 1925.

In 1927 a Waterways Improvement Committee was constituted by the town. Charles E. Greene was chairman and Mr. Davidson and Mr. Alexander of the Park Board were motive forces in it. The committee approved the Kellaway designs and urged the town to put them into immediate execution. As a first step the town voted to purchase the land at the corner of Lake and Main



SITE OF THE PARK SHOWN BELOW AS IT WAS IN 1930



A PARK ON THE ABERJONA AS IT IS IN 1936



streets bordering on Wedge Pond. Several dilapidated buildings that covered the ground were pulled down and a small but attractive bit of park land resulted, ornamented with a rock garden in the middle, and affording the passer-by on Main Street a lovely glimpse of Wedge Pond and the wooded shore opposite.

Singularly enough it was the financial depression of 1929, which ruined so many projects, that breathed life into plans for improving Winchester's waterways. In the following year a committee was formed to raise by private subscription \$48,000 to be spent in providing work for the unemployed. Frederic S. Snyder was chairman of it and Mrs. Henry A. Hildreth secretary. The required amount was raised without difficulty, and it was spent with great wisdom in dredging and deepening the old Converse mill pond at the center and in facing the banks of the pond and the little island near its eastern shore with a substantial stone riprap. The pond was always potentially charming; the work of the committee made it emphatically so, and provided an unanswerable argument for the use of town funds for similar purposes.

The depression continued; so did the need for work relief. Money was raised both by private subscription and by vote of the town to begin work on the Kellaway plan. Mr. Parkhurst had forehandedly picked up land all along the course of the Aberjona where it flowed through the marshes, between Cross Street and Black Ball Pond and was ready to turn it over to the town at the price it cost him. In 1932 the town at various times appropriated \$75,000 for unemployment relief, and in 1933 it voted even more, almost all to be spent on the work on the waterways. In 1934 some \$60,000 more was raised and spent on the rapidly developing project.

In the fall of 1933 the federal government entered the picture and, through the Civil Works Administration and later the Emergency Relief Administration, contributed sums amounting to about \$100,000 for specific items of the waterways programme, including virtually all the work around the shores of Black Ball Pond.

The transformation brought by all this expenditure, under the careful direction of the park department, is astonishing, though it can be fully appreciated only by those who are familiar with the conditions that existed in 1930. Beginning at the Woburn line the river has been dredged, straightened and for some distance led

into a new and deeper channel. The old marshlands have been filled and raised, with results agreeable to all except the mosquitoes which used to breed there, but which are now homeless. Three new ponds have been dug out along the course of the river, small but attractive; below each there is a dam to maintain the level of the water in them. Two new bridges have been built where the river crosses Washington Street. The swampy area to the west of the railroad tracks, once a part of Black Ball Pond, but pretty completely filled with mud brought down by the river current, has been cleaned out and given once more the aspect of a pond, sometimes called Aberjona Pond. From thence the water is taken by a single culvert, under the tracks to Black Ball Pond, somewhat reduced in size, but immeasurably improved in appearance by the construction of the playing field and strip of park already referred to.¹ Railroad Avenue has been extended along this green strip to join Spruce Street at the upper end of the pond.

One can now walk the entire length of the Aberjona in Winchester, over roads or excellent footpaths, much of the way over land that only five years ago was an impassable morass. Much remains to be done in the way of planting to develop the beauty of the new-born park land. But the essentials of the improvement are there, and they bear testimony to the vision and good judgment of the town authorities, who used the necessity of finding work for the workless to create something of permanent utility and beauty. The water of the river, no longer contaminated by refuse, and conducted between clean and well-kept banks, is regaining its purity.

For this desirable result the Winchester Board of Health must receive its full share of credit. Under the chairmanship first of Dr. Clarence J. Allen, then of Dr. Mott A. Cummings and finally of Dr. J. Harper Blaisdell, it waged a long and sometimes discouraging campaign to oblige manufacturing concerns outside the town to stop emptying offensive wastes into the Aberjona. Its protests, reënforced by the work the town of Winchester had undertaken to keep its own skirts clean, so far as the river was concerned, were finally effective. The State Board of Health issued the necessary orders in 1930, and a new sewer was built by the city of Woburn to take care of the material which had hitherto been conveniently

¹ See page 273.

dumped into the near-by river. The completion of an enlarged metropolitan sewer, from the Wedgemere district to Medford, put an end to the occasional overflows that had discharged themselves into the Aberjona near its mouth; and the trunk sewer now (1936) being built from Reading through Winchester and along the eastern shore of Mystic Lake, will still further help to protect the Aberjona from contamination. The little river, serene and unpolluted, is once more as nature meant it to be, an element of charm in the Winchester landscape.

CHAPTER XIX

FIRE AND POLICE PROTECTION. TOWN HALL AND PUBLIC LIBRARY. GROWTH AND PROGRESS

IN a community of frame houses of wooden construction, such as New England villages were, universally, in the past and, indeed, still are, fire was a continual and very serious menace. In olden times there were no means of fighting fire save by the householder and his family, assisted by such neighbors as appeared, forming a bucket brigade from the well, or perhaps a near-by brook, to the burning building. The buckets were passed from hand to hand and emptied one at a time on the flames, an obviously ineffectual way of dealing with a conflagration of any size. Once well started, a fire could not be extinguished till it had levelled the burning house to the ground.

There was no other means of fighting fire in Winchester territory, however, until 1835, when the town of Medford benevolently assigned a venerable engine called the Grass Hopper to the protection of citizens at the northwestern end of the town. The Grass Hopper was already seventy-two years old when it was transported to Symmes Corner and housed in Marshall Symmes's chaise house. It might be thought to have earned an honorable retirement, but it did such service as it was capable of for several years after 1835. "It was a primitive affair, little better than an ordinary force-pump mounted on wheels. It was nearly square, and was worked by hand-brakes. It had no hose at all, either for suction or delivery of water. The tank had to be filled laboriously from leathern buckets, a supply of which came with the engine. There was a platform over the tank whence protruded a copper pipe and nozzle."¹ A very moderate stream of water could be thrown perhaps fifty feet as long as the attendants kept pouring buckets full of water into the tank. When a fire got so hot that the

¹ MSS. notes on the history of the Winchester Fire Department compiled by A. Eugene Ayer and preserved at the Fire House.

Grass Hopper's crew could not keep their little engine within a few yards of the fire, they had to withdraw and resign the building to the flames; not much of an advance, it will be seen, over the old bucket brigade.

In 1840 South Woburn, beginning to grow into a sizable village, demanded better fire protection, and Woburn sent down one of its hand engines, the Water Witch, which was kept in a small house on Main Street near Sullivan Cutter's residence. Five years later the Water Witch was replaced by the Washington. The Water Witch had no fire company; it was drawn and worked by chance comers who had heard the alarm of fire. The Washington, however, was manned by a company of volunteers, fifty in number, of which Seth Johnson was foreman.



THE GRASS HOPPER

When Winchester was incorporated in 1850, Woburn withdrew its engine, and the new town had to purchase a machine of its own. It voted on May 25, 1851 to buy a Hunneman engine, then supposed to be the best on the market, which it presently did, at a cost of \$1,329.75.¹ The new engine was what was affectionately called a "hand tub"; it was named the Excelsior No. 1. For some years it was kept in the house on Main Street where the Washington had abode before it, and it was manned as the Water Witch had been, by any volunteers who presented themselves.

On March 14, 1854 a fire company was formed at a meeting in the Congregational vestry. As often happened in the early days, the leading citizens of the town enrolled themselves, from a sense of public duty. John R. Cobb was chosen foreman, and on the

¹ Town Records, Vol. I, page 300.

company roster were the names of Josiah Hovey, Sullivan Cutter, Captain Alfred Norton, Oliver R. Clark, Alvan Taylor and other men of mark in the community. This first company existed only two years, when it disbanded and was succeeded by another company of younger men. The company adopted a uniform consisting of "glazed caps and blue shirts and belts," worn, it is to be presumed, with whatever trousers were handy. It also chose a motto, "Our duty is our pleasure," which may be commended to the attention of humanity in general for its adoption.

In 1857 the town voted to build a new engine house, a two story affair so that the fire company might have a meeting hall above stairs. The house was built on Vine Street on the spot now occupied by the coöperative bank, and was dedicated on July 30, 1857 with a parade, in which visiting firemen from near-by towns took part, and a collation.

The fire laddies of Excelsior No. 1 were fond of "collations" both at home and abroad, sometimes furnished at their own expense, but more often at the expense of the citizens of the town who wished to stand well with the company. Entries in the old record book of the organization¹ often read thus:

"July 25th (1857). Engine taken to the fire and played. After the fire repaired to the engine house and partook of refreshments" — both solid and fluid, no doubt.

These "refreshments" on the occasion of a fire were paid for by the town, and were the only compensation the members of the company received until 1863, when the town voted them the munificent sum of \$3 a year. In the town records for 1857 we read that \$3.10 was spent for "refreshments at Mr. Lindsay's fire," \$16.99 for "refreshments at Dr. Bartlett's fire," and \$6.67 for "refreshments at Mr. Skillings' fire." The gravity of the conflagration can perhaps be estimated by the bill for food that followed. Thus the burning of the Congregational church in March 1853 cost the town \$95.21 for "refreshments and cigars"; but there were several fire companies from other towns present on that occasion, whose hunger had to be satisfied.

The Excelsior was frequently taken to "firemen's musters" in other towns. These were notable social affairs and among the most

¹ Preserved at the fire house.

popular of public entertainments. The "hand-tubs" from as many as twenty or thirty different towns would attend; their companies paraded in full regalia, drawing their machines through the streets behind them, to the music of a half dozen brass bands and drum corps. The event of the day was "play-out," a contest to see which of the engines could throw a stream of water farther than any of the others. "A collation" of more than ordinary splendor followed, and the day often wound up with a firemen's ball.

On September 21, 1871 the Excelsior went so far afield as Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and there distinguished itself by winning the "play-out" from twenty-five other engines. On its triumphant return to Winchester riding "high, wide and handsome" on a railway flatcar, the company was received with enthusiasm. All the whistles in town were blown, all the bells were rung and a cheering crowd assembled at the station to see the victorious tub unloaded. The company drew up in line before the Lyceum Building, and Selectman Joseph F. Stone made a congratulatory address. A parade and a collation naturally followed.¹

The fire department for many years was under the direction of three fire engineers, who were appointed by the selectmen and were in charge of the engine at all fires; there was also a steward to see that the engine was kept in good repair and the engine house neat and clean. A list of these engineers would be impossibly long, for they changed frequently with changing boards of selectmen. But it may be noted that C. H. Dupee, who had in earlier years been a fireman of the Excelsior, was so often on the board of engineers and so deeply interested in the work of the department that his friends in the company once bestowed on him in a set of resolutions the honorary title of "Father of the Winchester Fire Department."

The hand engine remained the sole dependence of the town until 1872; toward the close of this period the town became liberal enough to pay its members \$10 a year — which generally worked out to about \$2.50 for every alarm answered. But on October 10, 1871 there was a disastrous fire at the center which completely destroyed the Whitney mill. It followed after only a short time a fire which had destroyed a near-by building used as a button fac-

¹ Record Book of the Excelsior Co.

tory. The town began to feel that the hand engine did not afford sufficient protection. It had purchased a small chemical fire extinguisher, but this was of use only in putting out small fires before they were well started. Moreover the chemical, which was kept in the basement of the Vine Street engine house, was in charge of a man who little understood the constant care that such a contrivance needs if it is to be kept in good condition. The result was that the machine was never ready for efficient service when an alarm was given and was in continual need of repair.¹

To add to the feeling of insecurity, dissension arose in the hand engine company, many of whose members smarted under criticism of their efficiency; and on July 3, 1872 the company voted to disband. Two days later there was an alarm of fire in a large building at the center used as a boarding house, and the Excelsior in the hands of inexperienced firemen was quite unable to cope with it. The house burned to the ground.

This determined the town to buy a steam fire engine at once. That meant a new engine house too, for the old house was too small for the steamer, and the hose wagon and hook and ladder truck that were added to the equipment at the same time. The house was built on Winchester Place and was ready for the arrival of the new engine on January 15, 1873. This was the machine which was affectionately known to a later generation as "Mary Ann." It remained in active service for more than forty years.

The steamer required only three men to operate it; in order to supply a larger force of firemen and also to add to the better protection of the four quarters of the town four light hand-drawn hose carriages were bought² and volunteer companies organized to run with them. One — the Black Horse company — was stationed in a little house near Symmes's Corner; another — the West Side company — had its house on Cambridge Street; a third, the Excelsior Hose, was stationed on Swanton Street, and the fourth, the Rumford company, covered the district along upper Main Street. Then, or soon after, the crude beginnings of a fire alarm system were instituted. Instead of the clamor of the church bell which as in all New England villages was the original fire alarm, the whistles

¹ Letter in *Middlesex Journal*, March 2, 1872.

² Ordered bought December 14, 1874.

on the Moseley and Waldmyer tanneries were put to use. The town was divided into four or five districts and a corresponding number of blasts on the whistle at least told the call firemen in what part of the town the fire was to be found. The watchman at the tannery would often detect a blaze, before word had got to him, by seeing the light reflected from it upon the midnight sky; and once or twice he conscientiously blew his whistle, only to have the sleepy firemen discover that the suspicious light he had observed was cast upward by the rising moon.

Not even the new steamer contributed so much to the protection of the town against fire as the introduction of a water system in 1875. From the hydrant service a constant and ample water supply was always at hand in almost any part of the town. The firemen no longer had to depend on shallow wells or inadequate cisterns, when a fire was not considerate enough to break out convenient to a pond or river, and often the local hose company by coupling directly to a hydrant were able to get a fire under fair control before the steam engine could reach the spot.

In the newspapers and records of the seventies and eighties, we often find the horse-drawn hose reel stationed at the center engine house referred to as the "P. Waldmyer Hose" and the hook and ladder truck called the "J. W. Huse Co." Occasionally also there is mention of the "Alexander Moseley" steamer, and the "J. F. Dwinell" chemical engine. This does not signify that any of the gentlemen mentioned sustained any causative relation to the presence of the apparatus in the service of the town. It seems that on the upper floor of the engine house there were meeting rooms for the use of the several companies that were attached to these pieces. Mr. Waldmyer generously furnished the room occupied by the hose company, Mr. Huse bought the furniture for the hook and ladder company, and so on. It was purely in grateful compliment that their names were attached to the companies whom they had befriended and the machines which those companies operated.

There is no doubt that the town was better off for fire protection after the steamer was purchased. But for a good many years its efficiency was somewhat impaired because it had no horses regularly attached to it. Fires were so rare that the town felt it a needless expense to buy horses and use them only four or five times

a year. The horses used by the highway department were supposed to be taken to the fire house when an alarm sounded, and hitched to the engine; and in case of emergency horses might be hired — by agreement — from a livery stable or the local express company. Usually this arrangement worked well enough, but there is on record one earnest complaint from the fire engineers that at a fire in Baconville the steamer was forty-five minutes late because the town horses were at work near the Stoneham line, and no spare horses could be found at the livery stable, so the engine had to wait idly till the town horses came jogging back with their tip-carts from the distant scene of their labors — and meanwhile the fire burned merrily away, to the complete destruction of the building. The engineers begged the selectmen to keep some horses at least within reasonable distance of the engine house!

The fire-alarm telegraph system was introduced in 1888. Beginning modestly with four boxes at Cross and Washington, Swanton and Washington, Church and Bacon streets, and Symmes's Corner, eight more were presently added, and the system has been expanded as necessity required, until today (1936) there are forty-seven alarm boxes in the town. The telegraph has always been connected with a fire whistle on the tannery now owned by Beggs and Cobb, and with a bell at the engine house in the center.

In 1892 the department was pretty thoroughly reorganized. The fire engineers got their own horses at last, and having them, felt that the neighborhood hose reels in the four quarters of the town were no longer needed. They were accordingly discontinued, and the apparatus was concentrated at the center, except for the horse-drawn hose carriage which was stationed in a house built for it on Swanton Street. The fire engineers were able under this arrangement to reduce the number of men under pay from fifty or sixty to only three permanent and twenty-five call men.

This reorganization was not accomplished without a good deal of heart-burning. The men who had run with the old hand reels felt injured, and showed it by an unwillingness to join the new force of call men even when requested to do so. The voters at town meetings sympathized with them, and feared there were no longer enough men on duty to attend efficiently to the business of fire fighting. They were especially nervous because there were at this

time a number of fires in the town which seemed to be incendiary in origin. Only a few days before town meeting a part of Mr. Emerson's coal and lumber yard was burned — evidently the work of a firebug. So they voted that the personnel of the department ought to be increased,¹ and several men were accordingly added to it. But the hose companies did not come back, and it was soon admitted that they were not needed.

It would serve no purpose to record all the purchases of apparatus that have been made during the years in which the Winchester fire department has expanded and improved into one of the most efficient fire forces in the state. It remained under the direction of its three fire engineers (one of whom came to have the title of chief engineer) until 1913, when another reorganization took place. A permanent chief engineer was appointed, a well-paid officer who should give his entire time and energy to his duty, and the force of permanent firemen was considerably increased. It was a needed improvement, for the modern fire apparatus can neither be properly cared for or competently worked except by men who are in no small degree specialists. David H. DeCoursey was the first chief appointed. He still remains in active duty.

In 1912 the motorizing of the department's apparatus had begun with the purchase of a combination hose and chemical wagon. Two years later a powerful automobile pump was bought; "Mary Ann" was relegated to the reserve and soon disposed of altogether. Nothing but motor-driven apparatus has been used for nearly twenty years.

In 1913 too, steps were taken to provide a new and commodious engine house to take the place of the dilapidated structure on Winchester Place which had long been inadequate, and was not large enough to hold the kind of motor apparatus that was coming into use. The house stands on Mt. Vernon Street, not far from the center; it was designed by Edward R. Wait, and is both attractive architecturally and intelligently planned. The building of the police department is connected with it, at right angles, its entrance on Winchester Place.

At the present time the department possesses six pieces of apparatus in active service — three pumps, a hook and ladder

¹ Winchester *Star*, April 8, 1893.

truck, and two hose trucks, besides a car for the chief, and a tractor no longer used. There are sixteen permanent firemen in addition to the chief, and twenty call men.

Winchester has had its share of serious fires in the past, but it is to be noticed that it has had none that could be so described since the burning of the Blank Brothers tannery on Lake Street in 1910. This good fortune is largely due no doubt to the fact that there are few large industrial establishments in the town, and that Winchester is a town of detached residences. It is only fair, however, to give some of the credit to a well-equipped and efficient fire department.

There is less of color in the chronicles of Winchester's police department than in those of the fire fighters. For a number of years after the incorporation of the town, the two constables duly elected at the March town meeting were also commissioned as police officers, and were the only police force of the town. They wore badges no doubt, but no uniforms, and they had no regular stations or hours of duty. Their pay (first recorded in 1853) was modest: \$10 a year at first, and gradually increased to \$15, \$20 and even \$25. As police officers they owed their appointment to the selectmen. By 1870 the number of police officers had risen to four, and in 1874 to seven, one of whom — F. H. Johnson — is designated as chief. As such he was elected by the policemen themselves.¹ The town had become more generous, as the duties of the policemen had also become more onerous, and those who served for a complete twelve-month were paid \$100.

In 1878 the selectmen began the appointment of a chief of police; Zanon A. Richardson was the first. But how sketchy the organization was may be seen by the plaintive report of Chief C. H. Dupee, who succeeded Mr. Richardson. "There being dissatisfaction in the organization of the force, some of the officers concluded to work by themselves, thereby causing a continual discord and making it impossible for us to keep a full record of the work done"(!) The officers, it appears, were accustomed to take any prisoners they arrested directly to the Woburn Court, without even bothering to tell their chief what they had done.

¹ Town Reports for 1874 (Police Report).

A great part of the police work at this time consisted in dealing with illicit sales of liquor, which seem to have been very prevalent. "Some of their places we have succeeded in closing," says Chief Richardson with some conscious pride, "while others have been confined to sales 'behind the curtain' to young men who are there taught to take the first steps in iniquity; and when we gently endeavor to apply the law to these tippling shops, the cry comes 'Oh persecution! persecution!'"¹ Evidently Winchester's chief was making discovery simultaneously with Mr. W. S. Gilbert's sergeant of police in the "Pirates of Penzance" that "a policeman's lot is not a happy one!"

In 1880 the town was so far stirred up about the selling of liquor that it appropriated \$500 for "suppression" of the nuisance, and the selectmen had to take some harsh criticism because they hesitated to spend it. "We did not deem it advisable," they said in their defence, "to make use of so questionable a mode of obtaining evidence, as to employ spies. . . . We believe more drunkards can be reclaimed by kindness than by force, and so also with the sale of liquor." To this humanitarian doctrine Selectmen Albert Ayer, Warren Johnson and C. H. Dunham subscribed their names.²

They had good reason to explain and defend their action, for at this period the feeling on the question of temperance was very strong throughout New England, and Winchester was no exception. The Reform Club had been formed in 1876, and during the twelve years of its existence four hundred men of the town became members. The club was exceedingly active from the first in the effort to reclaim drunkards, inculcate total abstinence and promote temperance legislation. Some of the leading men of the town were its presidents — S. C. Small, John R. Cobb, Sumner Richardson, Edwin Robinson, A. E. Rowe and others. Robert Cowdery was its treasurer. The Reform Club had rooms in the Richardson Block, and every Sunday it had devotional services in Lyceum Hall with addresses by well-known temperance advocates. Among its most enthusiastic members was John R. Hemingway, himself a fluent lecturer on temperance, and a police officer who was especially active in running down the illicit barrooms.

¹ Town Reports for 1879.

² Selectmen's Report for 1881, page 9.

The Reform Club was one of a chain of "Red Ribbon Clubs" which were formed originally as temperance organizations composed entirely of reformed drinkers, but the Winchester club was more inclusive; anyone above the age of fifteen might join.¹

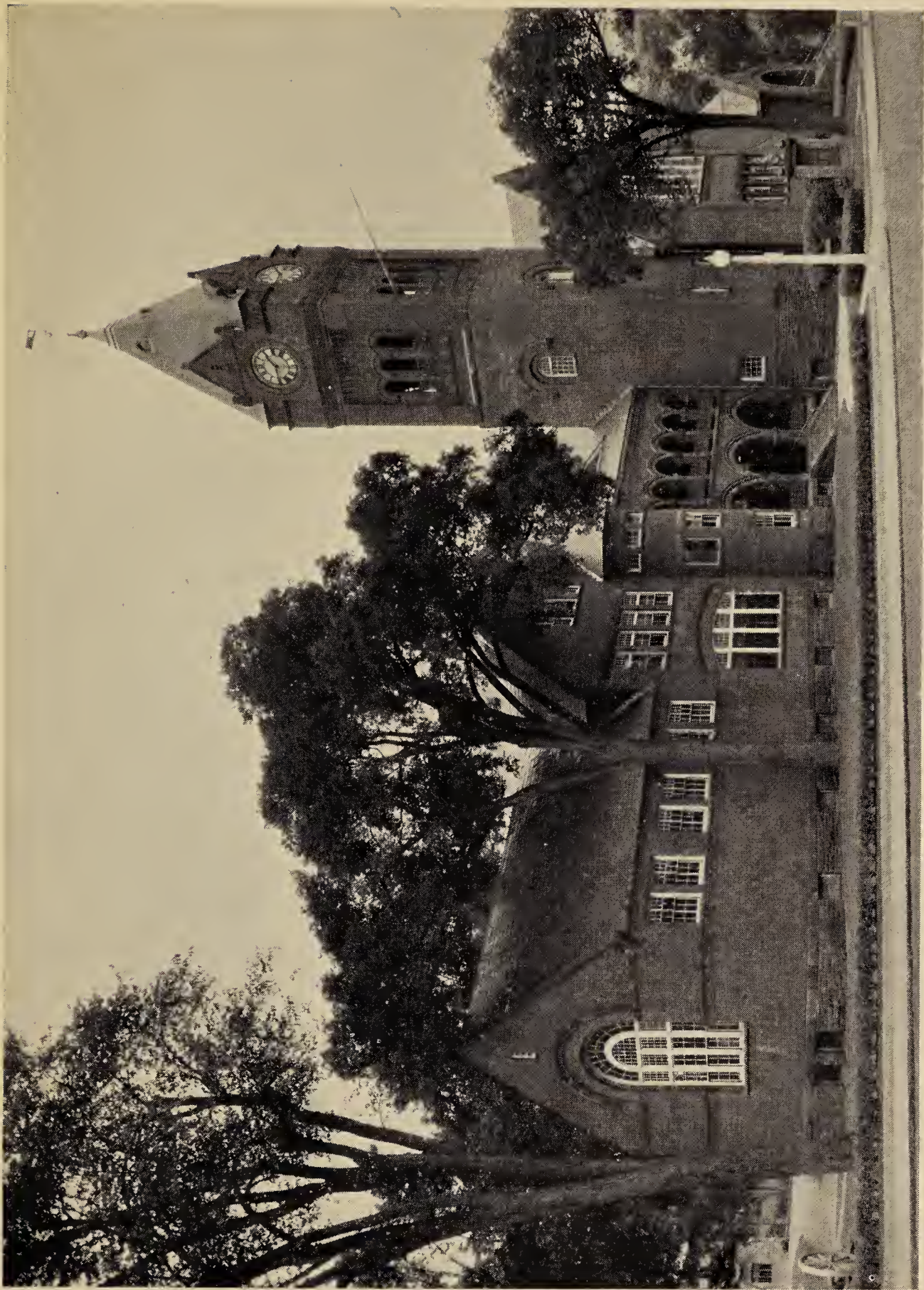
At the same time the local Women's Christian Temperance Union was formed, with Mrs. J. D. Sharon as president, and a very large number of the women of the town were enrolled. The fiery enthusiasm of the women long survived that of the men. The Reform Club lived only twelve years; the Union, after fifty years of existence, still retains its vitality and battles tirelessly in the cause of temperance reform. More will be said of it in a later chapter. With the town so deeply stirred over the liquor question it behooved the police to give a satisfactory account of themselves or show the reason why.

By 1882 we find a policeman for night duty mentioned for the first time. A few years later there were two, while the chief, now paid \$500, was alone on day duty. It became the practice to appoint a number of special policemen who had badges, could make arrests, and might be called on for emergency duty, but who served without pay. Uniforms for the regular men — at least to the extent of a gold-braided cap — appeared.

In 1897 William R. McIntosh succeeded J. Winslow Richardson as chief, and began a service of thirty-four years, during which the police department was modernized, enlarged and conducted with unfailing discipline and efficiency. When he took office the force consisted of only three patrolmen; it was not until 1898 that there was any day policeman except the chief himself. From that day the department has continuously increased in size, until at present (1936) it consists of a lieutenant and two sergeants, besides the chief, twenty patrolmen, and some twenty-five special officers, who act only when called upon and are paid for the time actually spent on duty.

The original lock-up of the town was in the basement of the engine house on Vine Street where there were two cells for the accommodation of the occasional vagrant or drunkard and the very rare person who had committed a real crime. In this basement also the local trial justice — Abraham B. Coffin was the first, and George S. Littlefield succeeded him — was accustomed to hold

¹ Winchester *Star*, January 4, 1901.



THE TOWN HALL



hearings when necessary. After the establishment of the Woburn District Court in 1873, Winchester was attached to that district. Mr. Littlefield was for some forty years an associate justice of that court, as Mr. Curtis W. Nash is at present.

When the town hall was built in 1886 a much more commodious lock-up was provided in the basement of that building, which also contained a room or rooms for the use of the chief and later of the patrolmen. This served until 1913, when a really serviceable building was erected for the police department as a wing of the new fire house.

It is time to tell the story of the building of the town hall, to which reference has just been made. As has generally been the case when matters of high import to the citizens of Winchester presented themselves, this business of a town hall was not settled without controversy, and warm controversy too. The town had existed for more than thirty years, and several town meetings had voted down proposals to build one; but by 1885 public opinion was beginning to recognize its necessity. The inconvenience of having the various town offices scattered in different buildings through the center, the inadequacy of Lyceum Hall as a meeting place (for it would hold only a third of the qualified voters) and the rising expense of rented quarters for the town boards and officers, all furnished arguments for the erection of a town house. The annual meeting of March 28, 1885 voted to appoint a committee of five — John T. Wilson, Joseph H. Tyler, S. W. Twombly, Stephen Thompson and George D. Rand — to consider and report upon the matter.¹ The site most generally approved was the vacant land about an acre in extent at the corner of Washington and Pleasant² streets. This lot was owned by O. W. Gardner; but to make the site symmetrical in shape it was thought to be necessary to buy some part of the land belonging to Alexis Cutting on Washington Street.³ But Mr. Gardner wanted \$9,000 for his property, and Mr. Cutting was said to ask \$6,000 for the much smaller parcel of land required of him. The members of the committee hesitated to pay such prices, and took under consideration several other sites, particularly the Nutter

¹ Town Records, Vol. III, page 66.

² Now Mt. Vernon Street.

³ His house was that now occupied by the American Legion.

estate which ran through from Main to Washington streets just behind the present site of the high school.

The town at once divided on the question, and discussion became warm, and sometimes acrimonious. At the town meeting of April 1, 1886 a new committee was appointed and virtually instructed to buy the Gardner and Cutting land; the vote was 127 to 65.¹

The new committee consisted of John T. Wilson, Joseph H. Tyler, Moses A. Herrick, David N. Skillings, Jr., Henry A. Emerson, Thomas P. Ayer and Stephen Thompson. All except Mr. Wilson turned out to be opposed to the purchase of the Gardner lot, which they had been virtually instructed to buy. Their thrifty souls revolted at the idea of paying so much money for the land, and they succeeded in convincing themselves that some other site — probably the Nutter estate — would be a better one anyway. In this they had the support of J. F. Dwinell, another very eminent citizen of the town. Indeed the majority of Winchester's men of leading, if not of light, were behind the committee when it came before the town at a meeting on April 20, and asked for the repeal of the vote instructing it to buy the Gardner lot. Mr. Wilson alone disagreed with the request and urged the town to stick to its original decision. The fight on the floor of the meeting was lively and not always good tempered. There is no stenographic report of the debate, but the newspapers of the day called it "heated,"² and at times disorderly, and spoke of Mr. Wilson's "aspersions" upon the actions and the motives of his colleagues.³ The discussion was prolonged for over three hours; when the vote was taken Mr. Wilson's views won, 178 to 147; the town hall was to be built on the Gardner lot, and at a cost of \$50,000 which the town appropriated.⁴

But the conflict was not even yet over; the defeated party continued to insist, first that a clear title could not be got to the Gardner lot, and next that if a title were secured, the land lay so near the level of the river that a fortune must be spent in draining and levelling it. The town meeting of July 16, 1886 was again the scene of fireworks, when it was proposed to annul all former actions

¹ Town Records, Vol. III, page 107.

² *Winchester Star*, April 23, 1886.

³ *Middlesex Journal*, April 29, 1886.

⁴ Town Records, Vol. III, page 119.

taken by the town with reference to a town hall. But the protestants were still in a minority. The only practical result of the meeting was the discharge of the whole building committee, which had twice been overruled by the voters, and the election of another consisting of Abraham B. Coffin, Robert C. Metcalf, Dr. Winsor, W. H. Brewer, Charles H. Dunham, Robert Cowdery and C. H. Ayer, a group of gentlemen who had not been conspicuous in the long struggle. Not even Mr. Wilson, who had won his fight for the Gardner lot against long odds, was permitted to serve.¹ The affair left scars that were long in healing; for men of the standing of Mr. Herrick, Mr. Dwinell, Mr. Tyler, Mr. Ayer and Mr. Skillings were not easily reconciled to seeing their views ignored, and they did not forget some of the harsh things said by their opponents in the heat of the debate. Yet it must be admitted now that the voters were right, and that no other site proposed had the advantages of convenience and sightliness that the Gardner and Cutting land possessed.

The committee named above duly acquired the land, though it was obliged to bring action for a taking of the Cutting land before the owner agreed to sell what the committee wanted. The town hall also was built during 1887, according to plans by Rand and Taylor, architects. The design of the building was criticized at the time and has often been criticized since, chiefly for a lack of compactness in the mass, and for a want of harmony in the architectural style; but the hall is not without dignity and has served the town acceptably for half a century.

The lack of compactness referred to was caused by the addition to the original plans of a wing to be occupied by the public library. The early history of this useful institution has been given.² For several years before 1886 it had been installed in rooms on the second floor of the Brown and Stanton Block. The new quarters in the town hall were far larger and better arranged, and the library remained in them for forty-four years, during which it thrived and increased in size, until the rooms which at first had seemed so commodious became crowded in their turn. Edgar J. Rich, who for twenty-five years has been a member of the Board of Trustees, was

¹ Town Records, Vol. III, page 126.

² See Chapter XIII, page 178.

active in town meetings in advocating the erection of a suitable library building. Records show that he served on seven different committees appointed for the purpose of considering the question before the town saw its way clear to erecting the much needed building. Finally, in 1930, the town appropriated \$175,000 for the purpose, and a building committee consisting of Ralph T. Hale, chairman, M. Walker Jones, James Nowell, Edgar J. Rich and Carl F. Woods was duly appointed. The library cost \$173,000 — another instance where an important public building was constructed within the original appropriation. The site was on the corner of Washington Street and the Mystic Valley Parkway on land long occupied by the residence of Mr. A. K. P. Joy, and later of his son, Fred Joy,¹ and his two daughters.

The new library was designed by Kilham, Hopkins and Greeley, and Robert Coit. It is a handsome structure of cut stone, decorated within somewhat in the "modern" style and containing ample well-lighted and convenient reading rooms, staff rooms and book stacks. At the rear of the building a most attractive gallery for the exhibition of works of art was added. In one wall are the very handsome windows of Tiffany painted glass given in memory of Joseph H. Tyler, long a prominent resident of the town and trustee of the library.² The gallery was at first used for the exhibition of the twenty or more paintings that are the property of the library, but since the formation of the Winchester Art Association in 1932 these paintings have been hung in the reading room and elsewhere, and the gallery is filled by monthly exhibitions of the association, where the work of contemporary artists and sculptors and craftsmen, usually from Massachusetts, is shown.

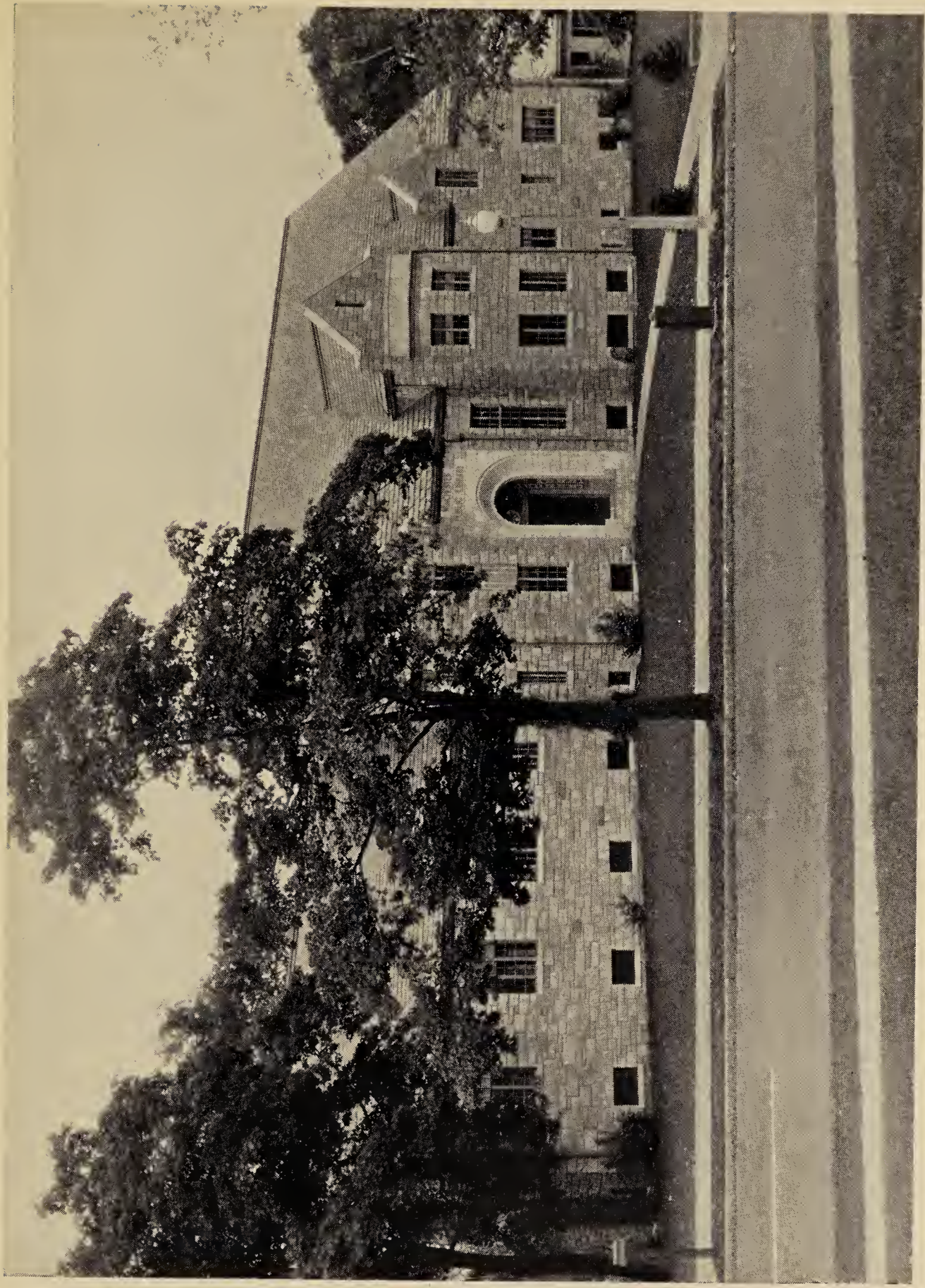
There are two mural paintings in the building. The larger one, painted by Aiden L. Ripley, is on the wall of the delivery room. It represents the occasion of the sale of the land on which Winchester stands, by the Squaw Sachem to the white men.³ The other, over the fireplace in the reading room, is the work of Ettore Caser. Its subject is "Bible Reading in a Puritan Home."

The library also contains an historical room assigned to the

¹ Mr. Joy was state Senator in 1901-1902.

² Mr. Tyler was for years Register of Probate of Middlesex County.

³ See Chapter I. This mural, or the central figures in it, is the subject of the frontispiece of this book.



THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

use of the Winchester Historical Society. This society, recently revived, was originally formed in 1884. Its first president was Abijah Thompson, its secretary Rev. George Cooke, and its librarian George S. Littlefield. The society was active for a number of years and collected a great amount of local historical material, much of which was printed in the nine numbers of the *Winchester Record* published during 1885, 1886 and 1887. This material, in manuscript, together with much added since and a variety of historical relics, is preserved in the rooms of the society.

The first president of the revived society was Dr. J. Harper Blaisdell, and Mrs. B. F. Thompson was the secretary. William N. Beggs succeeded Dr. Blaisdell in 1935.

The public library has had a number of librarians; in its earlier years changes were frequent. But since 1888 the office has been continuously held by Miss Cora A. Quimby. The length of her faithful and efficient service is remarkable among Massachusetts librarians. As an instance of long, devoted and unpaid public service, it may not be inappropriate to mention that the present chairman of the Board of Library Trustees, Mr. George H. Eustis, has held that position for thirty-three years. Now (1936) in his ninety-first year, he is constant and active in the supervision of the administration of the library.

The eighties of the last century were notable for a number of "first things" in Winchester. In 1881 the first town newspaper made its appearance — the *Winchester Star*. The paper was originally owned by the Whittier Brothers, who also published the *Stoneham Independent*. It was printed in Stoneham and was identical with the *Independent* save for its headline and a half page or more of Winchester items furnished by the local representative of the publishers. But in 1889 Theodore P. Wilson, who for several years had been that representative, took over the *Star*, established a printing office and made the paper in fact as well as in name a Winchester institution. The first number under his ownership came out on August 31, 1889. The *Star* office was then in the Miller Block beside the Aberjona. It was later moved to Church Street, and it now occupies a substantial brick building on Church Street not far from the corner of Main Street, which was built in 1915.

Mr. Wilson made the *Star* a local newspaper of real and devoted service to the town. He was its owner and editor until his death in 1919 when he was succeeded by his son T. Price Wilson, who is still its proprietor.

In 1888 the *Winchester Times* appeared and maintained a six months existence. During 1900 and 1901 the *Winchester Press* was published. It was largely a vehicle for the printing of a mass of historical material about the town and the First Church, collected by the Historical Society, though it contained local news as well. Mr. Abijah Thompson was its chief promotor.

For a year or two about 1907 Mr. A. William Rooney printed the *Winchester News*, which was distributed without charge, being supported, in theory at least, by its advertising; but it was not financially successful. Since its demise the *Star* has been without competition in its field.

In 1886 Winchester saw its first street cars. In that year the North Woburn Horse Railroad, which already ran between Woburn Center and North Woburn, extended its tracks to Winchester, running the length of Main Street as far as Symmes Corner. The cars, drawn of course by horses, jingled through the center about once an hour; but even that disturbance of the peace was resented by some citizens, who made a valiant but unsuccessful attempt to persuade the selectmen to refuse permission for the tracks to enter the town. The horse cars were "dangerous; they would lead to all kinds of accidents, depreciate property and bring undesirable visitors into the town."¹ However, the majority sentiment was that it was a great public improvement. The tracks were extended in 1888 to the Medford line, to meet a car line that came up from Medford Square, and it was possible (if one had plenty of time) to travel by horse car from Winchester to Boston. The cars to Medford did not run in the winter, however, and complaints of the irregularity and inconvenience of the service are frequently to be found in the columns of the *Star*. Electric cars were substituted for horse cars over this line in 1896 — after some six years of unfulfilled promises—and this service continued to the satisfaction of the town until 1928, when the Eastern Massachusetts Railway, which had

¹ *Winchester Star*; letters in the issues of June 11 and 18, 1886.

made the Medford-Woburn line a part of its system, abandoned the trolley cars for the motor busses, a cheaper, more flexible and more convenient form of transportation.

The car lines to Stoneham and Arlington were built ten years later than the Woburn road. They were electrified from the first; the company that constructed them was called the Mystic Valley Railroad, and some Winchester money was subscribed to its capital. The first cars to Stoneham ran in June 1896; the Arlington line was delayed by the protests of people living on Church Street against having the tracks laid in that street, but the opposition yielded in the end and the road was opened on July 24, 1897.¹ For a few years it was necessary for passengers on this line to change cars at Winchester center, for permission could not be had to carry a second rail crossing over the railroad tracks. But eventually an agreement was reached to permit the Stoneham-Arlington cars to use the rail crossing already laid by the Woburn railroad, and travellers could complete the journey between our two neighbor towns without having to dismount and walk across the railway tracks. This road followed the Woburn-Medford line into the system of the Bay State Railway Co. and later into the Eastern Massachusetts, and motor busses replaced the trolley cars, at the same time that they appeared on the Woburn line.

Electric lights first burned in Winchester in 1888. The Winchester Electric Light Co. was formed by J. F. Dwinell, George S. Littlefield, H. C. Miller, Henry C. Buck (of Somerville) and a few other business men.² It began by purchasing its current from the Somerville company, but we read that it installed a dynamo in the "old mahogany factory" (Cutter's Mill) in June 1888.³ A few sputtering arc lights appeared in the streets, and the store fronts and an occasional residence glowed with surprising brilliance. In those early days, however, electricity was still a somewhat uncertain experiment in the lighting field — at least as far as Winchester was concerned. There was frequent complaint about the "failure" of the lights both while the Winchester company furnished them and after the larger Woburn Electric Light Company took over the

¹ Winchester *Star*, May 4, May 25, July 19, 1895, July 30, 1897.

² Winchester *Star*, March 3, 1888.

³ Winchester *Star*, June 17, 1888.

Winchester company, about 1890. The town appointed a committee in 1892 to consider the matter of establishing a municipal lighting plant; and that committee, of which Arthur E. Whitney was chairman, recommended unanimously that the town should build such a plant. The town meeting proceeded to vote its acceptance of the state statute permitting towns to build their own lighting plants, but the thing went no farther. It was brought up again in 1894, and another committee appointed. The pros and cons were debated in a lively manner in the newspapers.¹ A committee of well-qualified private citizens including William B. French, Charles T. Main, Louis F. Cutter, George A. Fernald and D. W. Pratt issued a careful study of the question and came to the conclusion that it would be uneconomical for the town to go into the business of electric lighting for itself. The majority of the voters appeared to agree, for when the matter was brought to the floor of the town meeting April 8, 1895 in the form of a vote to appoint lighting commissioners and proceed to the erection of a plant it was "indefinitely postponed."²

The lighting service soon showed improvement; the Woburn company was reorganized, and taken over (in 1908) by the Boston Edison Company; and we hear of no more proposals for a municipal plant. The excellence of the service given has been unquestioned for many years; the question of the rates charged has from time to time exercised the minds of many, and probably will always do so.

¹ *Winchester Star*, June 26, February 2, 1895.

² Town Clerk's Report for 1896, pages 24, 25.

CHAPTER XX

MEN AND EVENTS AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY.

A GROWING TOWN. THE HOSPITAL. THE TWO HUNDRED AND
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED

WINCHESTER had in 1890 a population of 4,861. It was on the brink of its greatest development in numbers and in wealth, a growth which increased its population to 7,248 in 1900 and to 9,309 in 1910, while its assessed valuation rose from \$4,667,055 in 1890 to \$12,758,750 in 1910. This increase was almost wholly in residential property; industrially Winchester has stood still to say the most of it; it has become a beautiful and thriving suburban town, a great part of whose citizens have their business and their occupations in Boston. Its industries are hardly as numerous as they were forty years ago.

In 1890 the Waldmyer tannery still stood on what is today Manchester Field, the large tannery of Loring and Avery, formerly that of Alexander Moseley and later that of Beggs and Cobb, was operating on Swanton Street, John Maxwell had a profitable tannery on the river bank south of Cross Street, and the Blank Brothers had a fourth on Lake Street. Of these only the Beggs and Cobb tannery survives. The Maxwell tannery was destroyed by fire in 1887, after a prolonged dispute between Mr. Maxwell and the Knights of Labor, who were the first aggressive labor organization to appear in the town. In spite of some suspicions, it was never proved that the fire was other than an accident. The tannery was rebuilt; but after Mr. Maxwell's death it was abandoned. The property was sold to the Whitten Co., manufacturers of Plymouth Rock Gelatine, and it is still (1936) occupied by that company. The Blank tannery was burned in 1910 and not rebuilt. The Waldmyer tannery, as we have seen, disappeared when Manchester Field was created.

The Whitney Machine Co. was active in 1890 in the old mill at the foot of the Converse mill pond. Near by was the furniture

factory of S. C. Small. Both buildings disappeared years ago. The Whitney Co. removed in 1911 to new quarters on upper Main Street, but since the sale of the company to the United Shoe Machinery Co. in 1930 that building has been untenanted.

The old mahogany mill of the Cutters was abandoned as such before 1890, but it was in use then and for some years later for the manufacture of school furniture by E. E. Peck, Miller and McLean and the L. M. Hall Furniture Company. This mill was torn down many years ago; the old mill pond above it has disappeared, and there is nothing now to suggest that for more than a hundred years the spot was a busy mill site.

Felt was being made at the Bacon mill below Wedgemere Station in 1890 and is still being made there today. About 1895 the Eastern Felt Co. (originally the Eastern Felting and Buffing Wheel Co.) was established on Horn Pond Brook at the foot of Canal Street, on the site of the ancient Belknap mill, built more than two centuries ago. Patrick Noonan, who had learned the mastery of the trade in the Bacon mill, was its active head, and long a prominent citizen of the town. Patrick T. Walsh, also a Winchester resident, is at present the president of the company.

The watch hand factory of James H. Winn's Sons, on the site of the old Richardson mill beyond Forest Street, was prosperous in 1890, and is no less prosperous today¹—a unique and interesting industry.

In 1893 the McKay Metallic Fastener Co., manufacturers of machinery important in the making of shoes, built a large and handsome factory on the vacant land near the river and north of Swanton Street. Their location in Winchester was in no small part due to the fact that it was the residence of Louis Goddu, a very talented and ingenious man, several of whose inventions were essential to the business of the company. Mr. Goddu, who lived on Madison Avenue until his death in 1919, was the holder of no less than three hundred patents, which ranged from the little wire clips, which are everywhere used to bind papers or pamphlets together, to the most complicated of shoe machinery. He was a native of Canada, who began life without what are called "advantages," but whose remarkable mental ingenuity won for him a

¹ See Chapter XV, page 208.

very considerable fortune. He was with Forrest Manchester and D. N. Skillings (Jr.) one of the original park commissioners of the town. He left a large family, many of whom still live in Winchester.¹

The McKay Company employed a large number of hands, and the establishment of their factory here led to the building of a number of new houses, especially in Harvard and Irving Streets. After a few years, however, the company was absorbed by the United Shoe Machinery Company, which concentrated all its manufacturing at Beverly. The fine new factory was sold to the Puffer Company, manufacturers of soda water fountains, and it was used by them for twenty years or more. The company is no longer in business, and the building, though admirably adapted for manufacturing purposes, lies idle.

In 1898 Arthur T. Downer established the Winchester Laundry in a little wooden building on Converse Place, having purchased a business of the same sort, which, after a few months existence, was about to pass into oblivion. From this small and humble beginning he built up one of the most successful laundry enterprises in the state. The original building, after several enlargements, was replaced in 1912 by a large brick and concrete building, and in 1920 the old Methodist church was purchased and remodelled for the executive offices of the business. Incorporated in 1906 and again with enlarged capital in 1913, the Winchester Laundry acquired branch establishments in Newton and Lowell, and in 1926 it became the principal factor in the establishment of New England Laundries, Inc. From a mere "shoestring" in 1898, the capital involved has increased to \$1,550,000 in 1935.

There is also to be mentioned the patent leather factory of the Allen H. McLatchy Co., a more recent industry located on Cross Street, and a prosperous manufactory of sash, blinds and doors, which James J. Fitzgerald operates in the old Chapin schoolhouse on Swanton Street. Such in brief is the recent industrial history of Winchester.

The years just previous and just subsequent to 1890 brought to Winchester a number of men who were to become very eminent citizens of the town. One of the most conspicuous was Edwin Ginn, who bought in 1881 the estate on Bacon Street between

¹ Winchester *Star*, February 18, 1893, March 4, 1893, April 29, 1893.

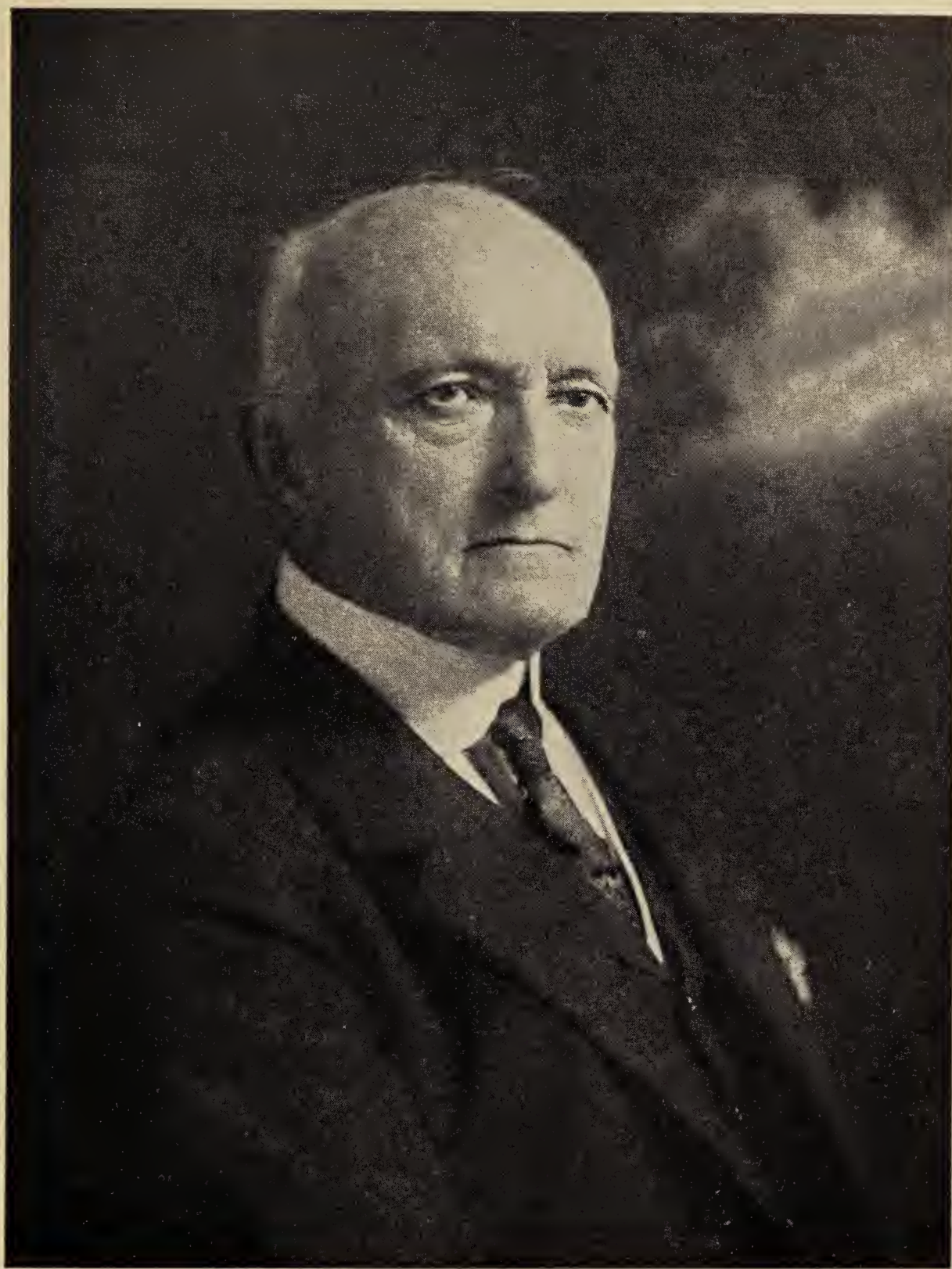
Central Street and the railway tracks formerly owned by Captain William H. Kinsman. Mr. Ginn was like Mr. D. N. Skillings, Sr. a native of Maine and, like him, a self-made man whose energy and sagacity in business established one of the greatest publishing houses in the United States.¹ Mr. Ginn became a very large owner of real estate in Winchester and was always deeply interested in the development of the town as a place of residence. His multifarious business and philanthropic interests kept him from accepting any leading part in town affairs. About 1900 he built the stately house, which is still occupied by his widow, and which contains in addition to the usual rooms of such a mansion a large and beautiful music room in which an organ is installed.

In 1887 and again in 1888 Winchester sent to the General Court (more commonly called the Massachusetts legislature) Samuel W. McCall, and thus began a very distinguished political career. Mr. McCall was a Dartmouth graduate, a lawyer by training, but a publicist and a public man by choice and aptitude. He was editor of the Boston *Advertiser* when he came to Winchester to live in the early eighties. His first home was on Washington Street near the corner of Swanton Street, his next at the corner of Washington Street and Park Avenue, and in 1902 he built the large and handsome house that crowns Myopia Hill, and is a conspicuous object on the skyline viewed from the Mystic Valley Parkway across the Mystic Lakes.

Mr. McCall was the most eminent political figure who ever lived in Winchester. After his service in the legislature he was sent to Congress, where he remained for twenty years, recognized as one of the ablest and most independent members on the Republican side of the house. His career terminated in 1919 after three terms as Governor of Massachusetts. Mr. McCall's congressional duties kept him much away from Winchester, but he was always devoted to the town, and his fellow townsmen never wavered in their affection and admiration for him, both as a man and a statesman.

Another striking figure in the Winchester of the nineties was Thomas W. Lawson, the meteoric financier and copper magnate. His house, before he moved away to an ample estate on the South Shore, was on upper Main Street. He too had horizons broader

¹ Ginn & Co., publishers of educational textbooks.



GOVERNOR SAMUEL W. McCALL



than any single town could compass, and he took little part in the affairs of Winchester; but he was a stirring figure, who was always conspicuous wherever he was, and who dramatized himself so effectually that while he lived here he was constantly in the eye of the community. Mr. Lawson was a lover of dogs and horses, and the owner of a number of fine specimens of both animals.¹ In the matter of horses he had a rival in George H. Gilbert, a retired woolen manufacturer who lived in the house at the corner of Pine and Dix streets which he called "Sunnyside." Mr. Gilbert's passion was for driving horses, especially of the Morgan strain. While these two gentlemen lived in Winchester, fine horses were commonly to be seen in the streets of the town. Since their departure, expensive automobiles have replaced blooded horses in the affections of most men who can afford either luxury, but old residents can still be found who remember with a kindling eye the Morgan pair that Mr. Gilbert used to drive or Tom Lawson's "Glorious Bonnie" and "Glorious Arthur," his favorite high steppers.

Arthur H. Russell was a distinguished Boston lawyer whose residence in Winchester dates from the same years. Often he was chosen moderator of the Winchester town meetings; as a presiding officer he displayed a unique combination of gracious courtesy with firm determination, which none who observed it can forget.

I have spoken of the notable growth of Winchester as a place of suburban residence during the years following 1890. The development of the "West Side," now so thickly covered with attractive dwelling houses, dates from the nineties. Previous to those years only Church, Bacon, Fletcher, Wildwood and Cambridge streets existed, together with the beginnings of Everett Avenue. There were a few houses scattered along these streets, but most of the land, level and admirably adapted for building, was still used for farming or market gardening — or for nothing at all. The wide area between Church, Cambridge and Wildwood streets was still called Wyman's Plains, though the Wyman family no longer owned the land. The boys still played ball on Bacon's Field where Stratford Road now runs.

¹ In the New York Horse Show of 1899, Mr. Lawson entered no less than sixteen horses from his stables.

It was in 1890 that the attention of enterprising real estate salesmen was drawn to this promising region. Suburban development around Boston was becoming popular, and the attractions of Winchester were well understood. Mr. Frank B. Forsyth, who lived on Central Street (he would be called a "realtor" today), conceived the idea of forming a land syndicate, buying up all Wyman's Plains, opening streets and building houses upon them, and so making a fortune for the investors. The syndicate was formed in 1891, and the bonds and stock were readily sold, mainly to Boston investors. With the money thus raised, reënforced by more, borrowed on mortgages, some seventy-five acres belonging to William Boynton, Henry A. Emerson, V. P. Locke and Joseph Purington were bought. The streets now known as Calumet Road, Foxcroft Road, Wedgemere Avenue, Salisbury, Oxford and Yale streets were laid out, and a number of houses were built or started. But the syndicate (first called the West Side Syndicate, and later the Wedgemere Syndicate) fell upon hard times when the panic of 1893 arrived. Neither land nor houses sold fast enough to make the venture profitable, and early in 1895 the land was sold to other owners—in some cases to the banks who had advanced the mortgage money.¹

The name Wedgemere, by the way, was first suggested by Charles P. Curtis in 1860. A movement among the "young men of the town" was set afoot to change the name of Wedge Pond to something more genteel. Echo Lake was suggested. Mr. Curtis who was interested, since his house stood upon the banks of the pond, thought that commonplace, and coined the name Wedgemere. There was a public meeting, and the advocates of Echo Lake carried the day over Mr. Curtis's objections, which seem to have been stated with more force and heat than courtesy.² However, the new name did not stick. Both it and Wedgemere were forgotten until the latter was revived by a tennis club formed in the eighties, which played on the courts on Palmer Street where the playground now is, on the border of Wedge Pond. The name Wedgemere seems to have been adopted by Mr. Forsyth (without

¹ *Winchester Star*, March 15, 1890, January 24, 1891, July 17, 1893, August 18, 1894.

² *Middlesex Journal*, September 8, 1860; article by Arthur E. Whitney in *Winchester Star*, February 17, 1899.

any special appropriateness) for his land development — no doubt because he found it original and pleasing to the ear. About the same time it was given to the railway station hitherto called the Mystic Station. It is said the name was changed by the Boston and Maine Railroad because so many of its patrons, desiring to attend the trotting races at the old Mystic Park in Somerville, made the mistake of buying tickets to Mystic Station — only to find themselves deposited in Winchester three or four miles from the trotting park.

But the development of the West Side, though arrested, went on at a slower pace. Mr. Ginn opened Stratford Road and sold house lots upon it. Mr. Twombly opened Lawrence and Harrison streets and found buyers for his land. Everett Avenue was pushed through to Cambridge Street and began gradually to fill with some of the handsomest houses in town, and the land laid out by the Wedgemere Syndicate, now fallen into other hands, year by year blossomed with attractive residences, occupied almost exclusively by the families of business and professional men from Boston who had learned the advantages and attractions of Winchester as a place for their homes.

The part that Captain Phineas T. Nickerson took in directing this fortunate development ought not to go unmentioned. Captain Nickerson, a retired sea captain with a fondness for building, bought many of the lots in this part of the town, and erected on them houses that were invariably tasteful in design and excellent in construction. His houses set a high standard and attracted purchasers of a substantial sort. They stamped on the growing neighborhood a "desirable" character it has never lost.¹

Meanwhile the high land on Myopia Hill, perhaps the most beautiful and sightly part of the town, was gradually occupied by larger and more costly houses. Handel Pond and E. Henry Stone were the first to take advantage of the attractions of this hilltop. Samuel J. Elder and Governor McCall built not long after on still higher ground. Oren C. Sanborn followed with his Italianate mansion, W. I. Palmer, Jere Downs, Dr. H. L. Houghton, Frederic S. Snyder, William H. Schrafft and John Abbott built in later years,

¹ Captain Nickerson's own house stood at the corner of Church and Fletcher streets, where old Andrew Huffmaster lived more than a hundred years ago.

and the more recent development of Swan Road has pretty nearly covered the hill from High Street to the Winchester Country Club with handsome estates, many of them notable for their beautiful gardens.

The harmonious development of the West Side was threatened for a time in 1901 when the heirs of the late D. N. Skillings found it necessary to sell the large and beautiful estate he had named Rangeley. They could no longer afford to keep it in the spacious and park-like form bestowed on it by Mr. Skillings. The purchaser, a Boston man, proposed to resell it to a real estate firm which intended to cut it up into seventy or eighty small lots, after the manner of many suburban "additions" of a less desirable sort. The town was shocked at the idea, but could hardly have prevented it from being carried out, had not Mr. Edwin Ginn, whose own estate on Bacon Street adjoined Rangeley on the south, stepped in, bought the land from its new owner, and announced that it would be kept substantially in the condition it then was.¹ That promise he kept, and Rangeley today, though a considerable number of new houses have been built on it, retains the unique park-like character which Mr. Skillings gave it.

There has been a development of the East Side almost equally fortunate though not so extended. The first unlucky experience of Arthur T. Wyman on upper Highland Avenue, which paralleled that of the Wedgemere Syndicate, was followed by a gradual and interesting improvement of that street, on which some of the handsomest houses in Winchester are to be seen today. About 1914 Mr. George C. Ogden covered with attractive houses the hillside above Symmes Corner,² where not so many years before Samuel S. Symmes had had an orchard in which he raised the finest peaches that ever entered the Boston markets; and Mr. Ogden sponsored as well the building of scores of houses on Manchester Road, Governor's Avenue, Park Avenue and elsewhere. George B. Whitehorne built a number of excellent houses in Wedgemere Avenue and elsewhere on the West Side which found a ready sale. So, partly stimulated by enterprising builders and partly advanced by scores of individuals who bought land and built thereon according to

¹ *Winchester Star*, November 22, 1901, May 2, 1902.

² Where Ridgefield, Edgehill and Bruce roads are.

their own tastes, the growth of Winchester proceeded, a healthy unhurried growth, but continuous. From 9,309 in 1910 the population swelled to 10,391 in 1920 and 13,371 in 1935.

Something appropriate, I hope, has been said concerning the elder physicians of Winchester — Dr. Ingalls, Dr. Chapin and Dr. Winsor. It is time to return to the subject and say a few words about the medical men who, following in the footsteps of that distinguished trio, have labored for the health of the townspeople and the alleviation of their more or less inevitable ills.

Dr. D. W. Wight, who was coeval with Dr. Winsor, lived and practised here for several years in the seventies. He lived on Main Street just beyond the old Wakefield house, in which in those years the savings bank had its home. He left Winchester in 1876.

A few years later Dr. Daniel March, Jr. came to Winchester and practised in the house now occupied by Dr. Mead on Church Street. Dr. March, who swiftly became much beloved in Winchester, was a son of the venerable Dr. Daniel March, pastor of the First Church in Woburn. He was a graduate of Amherst College and the University of Pennsylvania Medical School and had practised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania before settling in Winchester. Dr. March was a skillful physician, and for many years was the medical examiner for this part of Middlesex County. His sudden and untimely death on January 1, 1897, when he was hardly fifty, occurred as the result of a heart attack suffered while he was engaged in his duties as examiner at Woburn. Dr. March was a public-spirited citizen and among other services was a member of the Winchester School Committee.

About the time Dr. March came to Winchester, Dr. Benjamin F. Church settled here also. Dr. Church practised in Winchester until 1917, and lived until 1931; he died at the age of ninety. He began life as a pharmacist in Boston, but studied medicine at Dartmouth and practised his profession in Boston for several years before moving to Winchester in 1878. Dr. Church was a family physician of the old school; his patients were devoted to him. Mrs. Church (Adaline Barnard Church) was a physician likewise, though she practised little in our town. She was an extremely handsome and brilliant woman, as many old residents of the town

will remember, and she was for many years a teacher of medicine in the Boston University School of Medicine.

Dr. Clarence J. Allen, a graduate of the University of Vermont Medical School, came to Winchester in 1898 after many years of practice in Waitsfield, Vermont. Dr. Allen's most notable service to the town was rendered as secretary and executive of the Board of Health from 1907 to 1919. From the incorporation of the town until 1878 the duties of the Board of Health were discharged by the selectmen, who confined themselves to abating nuisances obviously detrimental to public health or comfort, and to declaring quarantines in cases of epidemic illness. Dr. Winsor was the executive of the first independent board established, and after his death Dr. Church succeeded him. Dr. Allen took up the duties of the office at a time when the sciences of sanitation and public health were first being seriously developed, and when the pollution of Winchester's waterways by the waste products of industries farther up the Aberjona was becoming a very acute problem. He was active and courageous; he revolutionized the methods of the board and made it an effective agency for community well-being.

He organized the first thorough and scientific inspection of the town's supply of milk, extended the field of the board's work to cover the examination and control of the stables in town, improved the handling of garbage and the management of the town dumps, and carried on with energy the board's campaign to stop the pollution of the streams and lakes in the town; in all of which he had the coöperation of his colleagues, F. Manley Ives, Marshall W. Jones and D. W. Comins. His capable direction of the work of the board has been continued by his successors, Dr. Mott A. Cummings and Dr. J. Harper Blaisdell. Dr. Allen's health gave way in 1919 and he was forced to retire. He died June 3, 1921.

Dr. Cummings was a graduate of Dartmouth and the Harvard Medical School. He practised in Winchester no less than forty years — from 1888 almost to his death, which occurred June 23, 1929. His home was long on Church Street near the corner of Wildwood Street. Like almost every other doctor who has chosen Winchester for his home, he had the gift of winning the confidence and affection of his patients; his wife, who died before him, Mrs. Lenore Cummings, was a woman instant in good works and warmly remem-

bered in Winchester. In later years Dr. Cummings married as his second wife Miss Elsie Enman of Winchester.

In 1898 Dr. George N. P. Mead began practice in Winchester, living in the house formerly occupied by Dr. March. Of Dr. Mead, who still lives though retired from practice, it is enough to say here that he has always stood very high in his profession and in the regard of the people of Winchester among whom he has spent his active years. He is a graduate of Harvard Medical School. His son, George Jackson Mead, a native of the town, is one of the leaders in the aviation industry, long connected with the well-known firm of Pratt and Whitney of Hartford, Connecticut, makers of airplane engines.

Dr. Ralph Putnam, who received both academic and medical training at Harvard, practised in Winchester twenty years, from 1903 to his untimely death, not yet fifty, on October 17, 1923. Dr. Putnam was a man of very brilliant parts and a physician of high qualifications. His peculiar service to Winchester was the organization of a medical service of great efficiency in the schools of the town; he was the first school physician, and no town ever had a better.

Dr. Daniel C. Dennett, a graduate of the Bowdoin Medical School, has practised in Winchester for almost forty years. His house on Washington Street stands on the site of the ancient blacksmith shop of the Johnson brothers, Francis and Nathan. Dr. Dennett, though in general practice, has developed a special skill in the treatment of nose and throat troubles.

Dr. Henry L. Houghton, a widely known homeopathic physician with a degree from the Harvard Medical School, was for long a resident of Winchester, first on Pine Street and later in a handsome estate on Arlington Street. His practice has been principally in Boston. Dr. Herbert E. Maynard, also a homeopathic physician, with a wide practice in the town, has a record of medical work in Winchester since 1902.

Dr. Charles F. McCarthy died in 1921 after twenty-five years of successful practice in Winchester. He was a graduate of the Long Island College Hospital. For many years he was one of the Overseers of the Poor.

Dr. Clarence E. Ordway, a graduate of Yale and the Harvard

Medical School, and a resident of Winchester from early boyhood, has been in active medical and surgical practice since 1906. He is at present chief of the professional staff of the Winchester Hospital.

As for the doctors who have lived here for brief periods or who have more recently entered on practice in the town, a roll call must suffice. The roster contains the names of Dr. Lilley Eaton, Dr. Irving S. Cutter, Dr. Harold E. Gale (who rendered highly valuable service not only as a specialist in children's diseases but as an active guardian of the purity of the milk sold in the town), Dr. Arthur L. Brown, Dr. Richard W. Sheehy, Dr. Milton S. Quinn, Dr. Wilfred L. McKenzie, Dr. Harold F. Simon, Dr. Robert L. Emery, Dr. Roger M. Burgoyne, Dr. S. H. Moses, Dr. A. R. Cunningham, Dr. Harold Brown, Dr. Ralph A. Manning, Dr. Richard J. Clark and Dr. Philip J. McManus.

No less essential than the doctor in the proper treatment of the sick is the nurse. It was a clear understanding of this truth that led in 1899 to the founding of the Winchester Visiting Nurse Association. Even before this, the Women's Fortnightly Club, under the direction of Mrs. Dr. Winsor, its president, had for a year or two supported lectures and classes in home nursing, which had no doubt equipped a number of women to undertake the intelligent care of the sick. But the story of the Visiting Nurse Association, one of the most beneficent of local institutions, begins with a meeting of ladies at the home of Mrs. Stephen Thompson, February 1, 1899. The association was formed then and there; Mrs. Joshua Coit was chosen president, Mrs. Thompson vice-president, Miss Alice Pattee secretary and Miss Alice Shattuck treasurer. The purpose of the organization was to maintain a nursing service in the town, free for the needy, but accompanied by a moderate charge of a dollar a visit to those who could afford it. From the start the association has been largely supported by the voluntary subscriptions of townspeople who were interested in its aims, and that support has been so generous that the association has been not only continually useful but continuously solvent. It has at present a staff of three nurses; it does not of course pretend to supply trained nursing to those who can afford to pay for it; but through the daily visits of its nurses to the bedsides of those who require



Courtesy of Miss Florence Maynard

MRS. HARRISON PARKER, 2D



MRS. JOSHUA COIT



care and attention, but not the continuous presence of a nurse, the association has by its thirty-six years of friendly efficient service justified the hopes of its founders and made for itself an indispensable place in the community. To the poorer families in town to whom it has brought, free of charge, careful and skilful nursing attention they could not else have had, it has been a godsend.

The association has always been supported and directed by the women of Winchester. For many years its funds were swelled by the annual June Breakfast, served by the ladies in the town hall. This affair was attended by almost two thousand persons every year; Winchester folk look back upon it with delightful memories as a community effort in which the toil of preparation was recompensed by the success achieved in the support of a worthy cause and the social pleasure afforded to so large a number of people. The good women who all but exhausted themselves in conducting it, no doubt heaved a sigh of relief when the June Breakfasts were discontinued, but they were unique and cheerful occasions; the town has had no such opportunity for community meeting and acquaintanceship since they ceased in 1916.

Mrs. Coit, the first president of the association, was succeeded by Mrs. Ellen E. Metcalf, and she in turn by Miss Katherine F. Pond and Mrs. James W. Russell. For a time, while the Winchester Hospital was maintained by the Visiting Nurse Association, Mr. Harold W. Fuller was president, but he gave his attention solely to the hospital; the visiting nurse service was still directed by the women, with Mrs. Russell as chairman of the committee in charge of it.

In the reception room of the handsome building of the Winchester Hospital today hangs the portrait of Mrs. Coit — fitly so, for it was while she was its devoted president that the Visiting Nurse Association shouldered the task of supplying the town with a hospital. There were many to say that the undertaking was far too ambitious, and that in the absence of any large gifts or bequests from wealthy persons the town could not properly establish or maintain such an institution. It was recalled that in 1909 Mrs. Sophronia Harrington had offered the town \$50,000 to establish a hospital in memory of her son Frank. A committee of representative citizens — Lewis Parkhurst, Preston Pond, Alfred S. Higgins,

William B. French, John L. Ayer, William D. Richards and Nelson H. Seelye—had with Mr. George Harrington gone so far as to incorporate the Winchester Hospital, and to solicit subscriptions for an additional \$50,000 which they believed essential for establishing such an institution. The town had proved lukewarm to the project, and after six months of unsuccessful canvassing the corporation had disbanded and returned the \$50,000 to Mrs. Harrington.¹ If Winchester with \$50,000 in hand could not raise the necessary money in 1909, what chance was there to raise it in 1912 with no endowment to start with?

But the ladies went bravely to work. Their plans were far less ambitious than those which had failed three years previously. They envisioned a "cottage" hospital, to be operated for two years experimentally to determine whether Winchester did really need and would support a hospital. With an appropriation from the treasury of the Visiting Nurse Association and a few gifts and pledges of moderate amount, they had \$7,000 in hand. They hired a good-sized house at Washington and Lincoln streets — the Todd house so-called — had it made over to suit their requirements, and on March 11, 1912 opened it to patients. Gifts for furnishing the wards and rooms and for medical instruments and supplies were generous, for the townspeople admired the pluck of the earnest women who were willing to venture great things on so modest a foundation.

Twelve patients were accommodated at first, six in wards and six in one- or two-bed rooms. The nursing was attended to by graduate nurses, but this proved so expensive that in the fall a training school was established and four student nurses were received. Miss Grace Cushing was the first superintendent. The very first year proved the demand for a hospital in Winchester. The beds were continuously occupied, and many who wished to enter had to be denied for want of room. It was an interesting fact that not a few patients came from surrounding towns — Woburn, Stoneham and Reading in particular; a larger hospital it was clear could depend for patronage on a wider territory than Winchester alone. The Visiting Nurse Association took the lead as usual in raising the money needed to enlarge the existing hospital or provide a new and

¹ Winchester *Star*, January 15, May 14, August 27, September 3, 1909.

more adequate one. By a canvass of the town October 6, 1913 they raised about \$22,000,¹ and in the following spring a committee of the men of Winchester secured additional subscriptions of \$25,000.

With approximately \$50,000 in hand the association boldly determined to erect a new and modern hospital building. The large lot on Highland Avenue at Fairmount Street was bought, and Kendall and Taylor of Boston were employed as architects. It was not until May 18, 1916 that the cornerstone was laid by Mrs. Joshua Coit and Mrs. O. C. Sanborn, chairmen of the building committee. Governor McCall was present, and an address was delivered by Mrs. Henry L. Houghton, who had been from the first one of the most active and devoted leaders of the Visiting Nurse Association. The occasion was made memorable by the unexpected announcement by Mr. George Harrington that the will of his mother contained the bequest of \$50,000 — the sum she had offered the town seven years before — for the endowment of the hospital.²

The new building was opened for patients almost exactly a year later,³ and at the same time a nurses' home was ready for occupancy; \$10,000 had been secured for that purpose from the Andrew O. Slater Fund, of which Mr. Alfred C. Vinton of Winchester was a trustee.

The Winchester Hospital has been doubled in size since 1917. Within seven years from the dedication of the new building it was overcrowded and its endowment was entirely inadequate to its needs. Annual campaigns for subscriptions to its deficit were required. A committee of ladies, among whom Mrs. Oren C. Sanborn was the moving spirit, promoted an annual Pop concert, the proceeds of which went for the maintenance of the operating rooms, but still the institution was financially needy. In 1924 therefore Winchester saw a thoroughly organized "Hospital Drive" to raise \$250,000 for additions to the hospital building and its endowment fund. Committees of men and women were formed; the town was divided into districts, in each of which "teams" of earnest canvassers went from house to house urging subscriptions. The drive began with an enthusiastic dinner — with appropriate speeches — in the town hall; it ended on April 1 with \$232,100

¹ Winchester *Star*, October 3, November 21, 1913.

² Winchester *Star*, May 19, 1916.

³ It was formally dedicated June 30, 1917.

subscribed,¹ including a bequest of \$20,000 from Mr. George L. Huntress.

With the funds thus provided, a considerable addition to the hospital was built, and its equipment brought up to the highest modern standard. It is today one of the best small hospitals in the state, thoroughly equipped for both medical and surgical treatment and for work with the X-ray. It stands in a high and airy location, amid spacious and attractive grounds. It has eighty-five beds in wards, private rooms, maternity and nursery departments. Six are endowed free beds and twenty-five are in the wards.

The extent of the service it renders to the community may be gathered from the statistics for 1934-1935. During those twelve months 1,422 patients were received and treated, in addition to 133 out-patients. Eight hundred and nineteen were from other towns than Winchester; 70 physicians sent patients to the hospital; 1,809 radiographs were taken; 229 babies were born within the building. The endowment funds now amount to \$195,571. Mr. Albert K. Comins is the president of the hospital, Mr. Frank E. Crawford its financial manager. Dr. Clarence E. Ordway is chief of the medical and surgical staff which includes seventeen physicians and a consulting staff of twenty-one specialists. Miss Louise Dempsey is supervisor of nursing.

In 1933 the nurses' training school was discontinued; it had graduated, during the twenty years of its existence, ninety-two nurses. A year later the hospital and the Visiting Nurse Association were divorced. The hospital is now a separate corporation; the Visiting Nurse Association has changed its title to the Winchester District Nursing Association.

Another beneficent local institution is the Home for Aged People at Mt. Vernon and Kendall streets. The house was opened in 1894² in consequence of a bequest of \$2,000 for the purpose by the late Philip Waldmyer, owner of the tannery originally founded by Deacon B. F. Thompson. It was necessary to raise additional money in order to purchase and furnish the house at No. 2 Kendall Street; this was done by a committee of citizens of which Alfred S. Hall

¹ Winchester *Star*, March 21, March 25, April 4, 1924.

² It was dedicated on April 8, 1894.



THE WINCHESTER HOSPITAL



was the leading spirit. The house, though its means were narrow at first, has been continuously successful. It was able to accommodate only four persons when first opened. Successive enlargements, including the purchase of the house at No. 110 Mt. Vernon Street and its integral connection with the earlier building, have increased the size of the home until it can now take care of sixteen inmates. Its rooms are always full, and it is excellently managed; it is a "home" in every sense of the word; a happy retreat from the cares and anxieties of daily life for the elderly and aged men and women who are so fortunate as to be admitted to it. The presidents, in addition to Mr. A. S. Hall, who was the first, have been Preston Pond, Fred Joy, Nelson H. Seelye and Frank E. Crawford. It would take too much space to enumerate all the worthy men and women who have given their services as officers and directors of the Home; the institution has had the devoted support of great numbers of the citizens of the town from its beginnings to the present day. Its permanent fund amounts to \$120,000 in addition to the value of the real estate which it holds. Some twenty residents of the town have generously remembered it in their bequests.

The decade 1890-1900 saw two interesting historical celebrations in Winchester. In 1890 the town observed the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its settlement by Edward Converse and the Richardsons. In 1900 it celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its incorporation as a town. The first occasion was really memorable. The arrangements were in the hands of an active committee — J. F. Dorsey, Henry A. Emerson, Louis Barta, Henry F. Johnson and Edwin Robinson. A goodly sum was raised by popular subscription for the expenses of the celebration which was fixed for July 4, 1890. The day was fine and the town was crowded with visitors who poured in to witness the proceedings.

The procession, with Edwin Robinson as chief marshal and Major William H. Oakes of the Fifth Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Militia, Joseph J. Todd and Henry A. Emerson marshals of its three divisions, was long and interesting. The Woburn Phalanx, the Charlestown Cadets and the Lawrence Light Guards of Medford, appropriately preceded by brass bands, represented the military, and were followed by the Winchester fire department

— the steam fire engine, the five hose companies and the hook and ladder company in full regalia.

The second division consisted of a number of interesting historical floats—the landing of the Pilgrims, the Aberjona tribe of Indians, the response to Paul Revere's ride, Samuel Richardson the first and his wife, and groups of young girls representing the thirteen original states and the forty-two states that then constituted the Union. A battalion in colonial uniform from G. A. R. Post 15 of Boston and a company of kilties from the Clan McKinnon of Woburn also marched in this division, which was diversified by a coaching party from the Calumet Club, and two children of Thomas W. Lawson in a pony cart representing "Young America."

The third division consisted of wagons, often tastefully decorated, representing the various industries and private businesses of the town. The procession wound its way through the principal streets between lines of houses gaily decorated with flags and bunting. It was voted by citizens and visitors alike a very creditable affair.¹

The anniversary dinner was held in a large tent erected on the vacant land behind the Episcopal — now the Christian Science — Church which Mr. Nelson Skillings had offered for the occasion. Mr. Abijah Thompson presided over the exercises and Hon. Samuel W. McCall was the orator of the day. He delivered a sound and scholarly address on the historic associations of the day and the character of the government which we have inherited from the forefathers. Hon. Henry Cabot Lodge, whom Mr. McCall was shortly to succeed in Congress, came on from Washington to deliver a graceful little speech, and Mr. Henry H. Edes, representing the ancient town of Charlestown, and Mayor Edward F. Johnson of Woburn also spoke. Mayor Johnson permitted himself to rally the people of Winchester humorously for their presumption in celebrating an event that really occurred in the old town of Woburn two hundred years before Winchester became a town at all, but admitted that "no such celebration as this had ever taken place in the territory embraced in the old township of Woburn. In a family existing for two hundred and fifty years, the youngest child is

¹ For a full account of the day's events, including the speeches at the dinner, see the *Winchester Star*, July 12, 1890.

entitled to the respect and honor of being the first to celebrate the deeds of our ancestors on a scale proportionate to their importance."

The day closed with band concerts and fireworks. Edward Converse, if his spirit were able to look down on this celebration of his courageous invasion of the forested wilderness of Waterfield, must have smiled with satisfaction at the prosperous outcome of his labors.

The fiftieth anniversary of the incorporation of Winchester did not pass without observance, but was of a very quiet sort. The town, as such, took no steps to celebrate it;¹ but the Calumet Club under the vigorous direction of its president, Edgar J. Rich, determined to mark the thirtieth of April with appropriate exercises. There was a reception and dinner at the clubhouse, to which as many of the leading citizens of the town as the house would accommodate were invited. Mr. Arthur E. Whitney delivered a long and extremely interesting address on the early history of the territory now included in Winchester, and Rev. John W. Suter and Mr. N. A. Richardson also spoke.

¹ It did appropriate \$500 at a special town meeting in November 1899, but at the March meeting the vote was reconsidered and defeated.

CHAPTER XXI

THE GRADE CROSSING CONTROVERSY. WINCHESTER IN THE WORLD WAR. TERCENTENARY CELEBRATION

No history of Winchester can avoid extended mention of the grade-crossing controversy which has agitated the town at recurrent intervals for many years. From the very first building of the railroad the problem has existed; for the rails crossed at grade not one only but both of the principal traffic arteries of the town and at their precise point of intersection. Obviously the obstruction of traffic was bound to be serious, and the likelihood of fatal accidents considerable. When the Boston and Lowell railroad was built, this Winchester crossing was, with the exception of that at High Street, West Medford, the only level crossing between the two cities. It was even then regarded as dangerous, though traffic both by rail and highway was inconsequential compared to what it is today. The act incorporating the railway provided that the tracks should not "imperil or obstruct the safe and convenient use of any . . . highway," and empowered the corporation to raise or lower any highway that it crossed, if necessary, to avoid obstruction of travel.

As a matter of fact the abolition of the Winchester grade crossing was officially ordered — and this will surprise many Winchester people — one hundred years ago. The County Commissioners met at Abel Richardson's house on November 21, 1834, viewed the location of the railway and directed the highways (Church and Main streets; the present Mt. Vernon Street was not then in existence) to be altered and elevated, so as to pass over the tracks. Main Street was to be relocated, passing over the mill pond and through what is now Converse Place, rising gradually all the way; it was then to turn sharply to the west, in the line of the present Mt. Vernon Street, and be carried over the tracks to meet Church Street, which was also to be elevated from a point near the present Common Street, but not changed in its course. Beyond the bridge, Main Street was to be graded downward, till it reached its

old level somewhere near Park Street.¹ This order was definite enough, but for some reason it was never complied with. Instead the railroad erected the ponderous gates over the crossing which for a time gave the village the name of "Woburn Gates."

The increasing inconvenience of the grade crossing led eventually as we have seen, to the removal of the railway station from its original site beside the crossing to its present location. The original gates in time were taken down and for many years the crossing had no other protection than a flagman and conspicuously painted signs warning the public to "look out for the engine when the bell rings." Conditions grew worse, as the years passed; the selectmen were in continual correspondence with the railroad, demanding that the gates be restored,² objecting to the practice of detaching a Woburn car from a passing train so that it should "coast" up over the crossing some time after the rest of the train had passed;³ protesting against occasional freight trains standing upon the crossing and blocking it completely "in some instances as long as twenty minutes,"⁴ and so forth.

These nuisances were abated; new gates were put up, and the veteran Patrick Holland was put in charge of them. But traffic continued to increase and accidents to occur with disquieting frequency. The *Winchester Star* once published a list of forty fatal accidents that had occurred on the railway tracks from 1852 to 1914, twenty-five of them between 1882 and 1905.⁵ By no means all of them happened at the crossing. A few persons were killed at the stations incautiously boarding or alighting from trains, and a great many lost their lives while using the tracks as a footpath from the center across Black Ball Pond to Spruce Street before the town made use of its annual accumulation of ashes to build a real path alongside the tracks. But between 1900 and 1905 four persons were killed by railway trains at the crossing itself. The town was greatly stirred in consequence and determined that the grade crossing must forthwith be abolished.

The law at that time provided that in such a case a town might

¹ Records of Middlesex County commissioners, 1831-1835, page 471. See an interesting article by Arthur E. Whitney in the *Winchester Star*, December 7, 1906.

² June 23, 1880.

³ June 23, 1880.

⁴ November 9, 1881.

⁵ February 20, 1914.

petition the Superior Court, which would thereupon appoint three special commissioners to hear the plea, decide whether necessity existed for abolishing the crossing, and, if it existed, in what way it should be done. The expenses of abolition were to be borne by the railroad involved, the Commonwealth and the town — sixty-five per cent by the railway and not more than ten per cent by the town. By direction of the town meeting¹ the selectmen filed the required petition in court, and in January 1906 the court appointed George W. Wiggin, Arthur Lord and George F. Swain special commissioners to sit upon the case. The commissioners were agreed that the crossing was a dangerous one and ought to be abolished; nor did the railroad object, provided the cost were not excessive. The question was how best to go about it, and on that point a great diversity of opinion at once developed itself among the townspeople.

Obviously the ideal plan would be to depress the tracks through the center of the town. Unfortunately that was impossible. They would have to be lowered fifteen feet or more at the center, but the crossing is a bare twenty-eight feet above sea level, the subsoil is saturated with water, and the Aberjona has to be crossed only a short distance north of the center. The selectmen took the matter vigorously in hand,² and presently had a plan to propose to the town and to the commissioners. It had been worked out by Irving T. Guild, landscape architect, and John L. Brown, engineer, and it was known variously as the Guild plan, the selectmen's plan and, after its approval by the town, as the town plan. By this plan the tracks were to be depressed three feet and the highways raised to a maximum of sixteen feet at the bridge. That would require, of course, the elevation of every store or business building at the center of the town from three to fourteen feet according to its location, and it was the expense of doing so that was the chief objection to the plan.

Another solution was proposed by Ralph S. Vinal, a resident of Winchester. He would do away with the present crossing entirely and carry the highways across the railway by a new road, passing from Church Street at or near Common Street over the tracks just

¹ July 17, 1905.

² George Adams Woods, Samuel S. Symmes, Frank E. Rowe, William E. Beggs and William D. Richards formed the board.

north of the station and so through Waterfield Road to South Main Street at the Parkway corner, while access to the center itself would be provided through a widened Thompson Street. This would be less expensive but it was vigorously opposed by those doing business at the center on the ground that it would change the natural routes of travel disastrously and leave the center of the town cut quite in two.¹

Besides these two plans, over the merits of which the townspeople divided and wrangled earnestly, there were other suggestions, different in one or several details. We read of the Braddock plan, the Symmes plan, the Redfern plan and others; but none of them were seriously considered. The railroad had no plan to offer, and at a town meeting held in November 1906 the town appointed a committee of leading citizens to study and report on the various methods of abolition proposed.² The committee surprised every one by reporting in favor of a new plan, the "stone arch bridge" plan so-called, by which the railroad was to be carried through the town on an elevated viaduct and cross the highways at the center on a bridge of two wide stone arches. Incidentally the street level at the crossing was to be lowered seven feet. The committee's plan was loudly assailed by almost every one in town. The viaduct would be noisy and unsightly. The drainage of the streets in the hollow beneath the bridges would be impossible, the passage under the arches would be dark and dangerous. At the special town meeting of February 11, 1907 over which Moderator Arthur H. Russell presided, there was an abundance of oratory, but it was one sided. The advocates of all the other plans made common cause; the committee had no friends; their proposal was voted down almost unanimously.

This left the situation in confusion. The town had rejected the advice of its committee, and though at a later meeting it did vote to approve the selectmen's plan, and recommend it to the commissioners, it was known that public opinion was still divided.

¹ For a complete account of the controversy, with maps and estimates of cost for the various plans, see Special Report of the Selectmen issued in February 1929.

² The committee originally consisted of Charles T. Main, the distinguished civil engineer, George A. Woods, Marcus B. May, John L. Ayer, Marshall W. Jones, Lewis Parkhurst, Alfred Clarke, W. J. Daly, Warren F. Witherell, Addison R. Pike, S. D. Leland, Jere A. Downs, Winfield F. Prime, Francis J. O'Hara and Freeland E. Hovey. Mr. Pike withdrew and his place was filled by Daniel B. Badger.

Only two hundred and five citizens had actually voted for the selectmen's plan at town meeting out of more than fifteen hundred qualified voters. The Boston and Maine Railroad also entered loud objections on account of the costliness of the plan, which it was estimated would consume not less than \$900,000. The commission hesitated, delayed; held hearings, but put off its decision. It was evident that they sympathized with the railroad in the matter of expense and did not mean to condemn it to pay \$600,000 for abolishing a single crossing.

1911 came. The town, restive under continued delays, appointed another committee¹ to see if something could not be done to present a plan on which all could agree. This committee recommended a plan reminiscent of the Vinal plan, with a way from Church and Main streets, crossing the tracks at the station and closing the crossing at the center entirely. The town would have none of it. It voted it down 168 to 21 and also slaughtered a revived stone arch bridge plan 143 to 27. It was now the selectmen's plan or nothing so far as Winchester was officially concerned.

At last in December 1914 the special commission, harassed by the complaints of the town at its long delay, brought in a report. It held that public necessity did not require so expensive an abolition as the town plan, and recommended a somewhat modified Vinal plan, without the proposed widening of Thompson Street as a means of reaching the center. Their recommendation went for final approval to the Public Service Commissioners, and the town, through its counsel, Charles F. Dutch, opposed it vigorously. It was disposed to insist on its own plan — the old selectmen's plan — and to accept no other. The Public Service Commissioners rejected the report of the special commission on March 14, 1916, because the proposed plan "encroached on property dedicated by the town to park and playground purposes, makes long and circuitous detours from long established routes of travel . . . and would affect injuriously, if not destroy, the business center of the town." After ten years of agitation, struggle and heart burning, Winchester was back precisely where it started from. The grade crossing was still there.

The excitement of the war years, 1917-1918, and the financial

¹ Maurice F. Brown, John Abbott, Robert Coit, Vincent Farnsworth and Fred-eric S. Snyder.

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TOWN OF WINCHESTER MASSACHUSETTS 1936

SCALE
0 600 1200 1800 2400



THE TOWN OF WINCHESTER IN 1936, SHOWING ITS DIVISION INTO ELECTORAL PRECINCTS

TOWN OF
WHITCHISTAR

1880



difficulties of the Boston and Maine Railroad, which now became acute, insomuch that it was impossible for it to consider such an expense as \$600,000 for the correction of a single level crossing, postponed for some years any efforts toward abolition. In 1927 the matter was revived, and at this time another "plan" to avoid the crossing was submitted by Herbert J. Kellaway, the engineer who has been mentioned in connection with the improvement of the Whitney mill site. This plan proposed to close the crossing at the center as the Vinal plan had done, but to carry the highways across the tracks north of the center instead of south of it. A new road was to be constructed from the corner of Washington and Mt. Vernon streets through a portion of the Nelson Skillings estate, and behind the town fire house to meet Main Street near the corner of Elmwood Avenue. Two new bridges were required, one over the railway tracks and one over the Aberjona River. It was hoped by citizens who approved the Kellaway plan that it would offer a way out of the tangle on which all parties could agree; but it met the same opposition from those — a majority evidently — who did not want the center permanently divided by the railway tracks, and it would certainly be quite as expensive as any of the other plans suggested. The selectmen indeed estimated that it would cost \$1,185,000 as against \$1,065,700 for the original Guild or town plan.¹ Both the selectmen and the Planning Board were inclined to insist on the town plan as the only one that was at all satisfactory. At the town meeting of March 21, 1929 it was voted to press the matter again, but to leave the manner of doing so to the discretion of the selectmen, Joseph W. Worthen, Vincent P. Clarke, Walter H. Dotten, Harris S. Richardson and Harry W. Stevens. The board accordingly began proceedings all over again before the Superior Court, petitioning for the appointment of another special commission.

Before the court could act the Commonwealth by statute changed the method of dealing with grade crossing abolition, which has now become a matter of state instead of local action. The Department of Public Works is now instructed to report to the Board of Public Utilities a list of crossings which ought to be removed for reasons of public safety and convenience, and that

¹ See Special Report of the Selectmen issued February 1929.

board is empowered to order abolition according to its own plans and in its own discretion. The Winchester crossing stands high on the list submitted by the Department of Public Works, but the financial condition not only of the railroad but (since 1931) of the Commonwealth has prevented the undertaking of so costly a project. Winchester people have taken a fatalistic attitude toward the whole matter, and begin to doubt whether the improvement, essential as it is, will ever be made. Fortunately there have been no serious accidents at the crossing for a number of years, for it is carefully and efficiently guarded by the gatemen of the railroad; but the obstruction to traffic is worse than ever. Investigation shows that the crossing is closed eight minutes out of every hour during the daytime hours, and during some hours as much as one fifth of the time. There is no remaining improvement which would add so much to the town as the abolition of this crossing.

The part that Winchester bore in the World War was worthy of the town. It was of a kind quite different from that it played in the conduct of the Revolution or even of the Civil War. In the former the duty of raising and equipping men and the chief responsibility for their payment had lain squarely on the shoulders of the towns, and in the latter the towns were still obliged to enlist their own quotas and were put to no little expense in doing so. In the World War the Federal Government assumed all those responsibilities. It filled the ranks by general conscription, and it equipped and paid the men without any help whatever from local communities. Winchester had of course its own draft board for the registration of all male citizens between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-one; Robert B. Metcalf was its chairman, and George H. Carter, for many years the town clerk, was its recording officer; Howard S. Cosgrove, Bernard F. Matthews and Arthur E. Sanford were the other members. The war activities of the citizens were under the general direction of a committee of public safety, appointed by the selectmen on March 20, 1917. Of this committee Lewis Parkhurst was the able chairman and T. Price Wilson was the secretary. The committee otherwise consisted of Howard F. Bidwell, Fred Clark, Maurice Dineen, Samuel J. Elder, James J. Fitzgerald, James Hinds, F. Manley Ives, George B. Kimball,

William A. Kneeland, Jonas A. Laraway, Wilbur S. Locke, Robert B. Metcalf, Frank Nowell, James Nowell, Frank W. Reynolds, Dr. Richard W. Sheehy and Roland H. Sherman. Each member was assigned to a particular duty, such as transportation, food production and conservation, emergency help and equipment, coördination of aid societies, recruiting, protection of the town, welfare of enlisted men, supply of motor cars and trucks, sanitation, survey of dependents, organization of a home guard, and so on.

The committee was active and efficient. Fortunately no occasion arose for any armed protection of the town; but the committee maintained guards at the reservoirs throughout the war, equipped an emergency hospital — which was never used — and superintended the enlistment of a home guard composed of citizens beyond the draft age. Maurice C. Tompkins was elected captain of this company, Flavel Shurtleff its first lieutenant and Dr. J. Churchill Hindes and Charles I. Lampee its second lieutenants. It included about a hundred representative Winchester men from every walk of life, it drilled faithfully and well, and was in July 1917 mustered into the service of the state as a company of the State Guard. In January 1918 it became the Machine Gun Company of the Twelfth Infantry Regiment. It was not called upon for any active service; but it encamped with the Fourth Brigade, Massachusetts State Guard at Framingham in July 1918. Since it was purely an emergency unit, it was disbanded at the close of the war.

When the government undertook to help finance the war by the sale of bonds direct to its citizens, the Winchester Liberty Loan Committee was organized, with Ralph E. Joslin as chairman, James Nowell vice-chairman, Arthur A. Kidder secretary, and Mrs. Daniel C. Dennett chairman of the Women's Committee. More than one hundred and fifty canvassers offered themselves; and every home in town was visited. The committee reported loan subscriptions of no less than \$4,813,350 to the four Liberty Loans; an amount \$1,615,100 in excess of the "quota" allotted to Winchester. The Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of the town gave loyal service in this campaign and in the later one for the sale of "Thrift Stamps" throughout the community, and are credited with having secured subscriptions of \$211,398 and \$107,800 respectively to the Liberty Loans. Another committee for the sale of War Savings

Certificates and Thrift Stamps, of which Preston Pond was chairman, sold \$171,207 of these little securities in Winchester. Many were bought by the school children of the town. Mr. Pond was also chairman of a United War Work Committee which raised \$50,017.95, more than \$5,000 above the quota assigned to the town. The Fuel Committee, Jere A. Downs chairman, was active in controlling the price of coal and the conservation of fuel.

Those who lived through the war will well remember the earnestness with which the production and conservation of food was preached and practised. James Hinds was the chairman of a special committee in charge of this phase of war work. More than eighty acres of land in Winchester were either offered free of charge to whoever would work upon it, or were cultivated by the owners themselves. Little vegetable gardens or potato patches sprang up all over town, and middle-aged citizens who had never — or not for many years — thought of tilling the soil, bent their backs enthusiastically over their “war gardens.” The amount of edible food produced must have been considerable, and probably even more was “saved” for the use of the army by the economies practised in almost all homes at the call of Mr. Hoover’s Food Conservation Administration.

The women of Winchester had their own useful organizations. There were several units organized early in the war for the supply of surgical dressings, and all of them became associated with the Winchester Red Cross branch after its organization in the fall of 1917. Almost four thousand people of Winchester became members of the Red Cross at this time, and some \$36,000 was raised for the work of the society. Mr. Fred Joy was the first chairman of the branch, A. Miles Holbrook its treasurer, and Miss Edith J. Swett its secretary. It is difficult to say exactly how many surgical dressings and other useful articles were prepared by the busy fingers of the women. There must have been more than five hundred thousand pieces, however, mostly dressings, but with a great many knitted articles of clothing included. The Mysticbank Unit alone, of which Mrs. Elizabeth W. Marston was chairman, which met in rooms of St. Mary’s School, reported some two hundred and forty thousand pieces.

There were also active women’s organizations working for the

relief of the Belgian war sufferers, and a branch of the Special Aid for American Preparedness, of which Mrs. W. L. Dunning was chairman, which was at work as early as March 1916 and which made and distributed a great quantity of knitted garments, hospital bags, sewing outfits and the like. All these organizations were especially useful during the influenza epidemic of 1918, when there was urgent need for all sorts of hospital and convalescent supplies, not only in the army camps but in communities all over the country.

A number of Winchester men served in important administrative capacities beyond the limits of the town. Charles T. Main was consulting engineer to the Construction Division at Washington and a member of the Engineering Committee of the Massachusetts Fuel Administration. Frederic S. Snyder was a member of the Massachusetts Committee of Public Safety and of the Milk Commission of New England under the Federal Food Administration. He held almost a dozen important posts in connection with that administration, including those of the chief of the Coördination of Food Purchase and chief of the Meat Division. He was also a member of the Commission for the Relief of Belgium.

Maurice F. Brown gave important service to the work of the Emergency Fleet Corporation, Walter E. Chamberlain was one of the Lumber Committee of the War Industries Board, Richard B. Derby was a project supervisor for housing and transportation under the Emergency Fleet Corporation, Dwight P. Thompson was a supervisor at the Hog Island Ship Construction yards, John A. Lowe was supervisor of Camp Libraries in Massachusetts, Dr. G. N. P. Mead was a member of the Draft Board for Division 30 in Massachusetts, and John A. Tarbell was in the liaison office of the Construction Division of the War Department in Washington. Elbridge K. Jewett, who was at the time a selectman of the town, rendered important service as a member of the State Draft Board.

So much then for the war work that went on at home. Now for the military side of the picture. The list of Winchester men and women who saw service in uniform contains 648 names, 22 of whom were enlisted in Y. M. C. A. or in Red Cross work, as war nurses or "yeowomen." Most of the remaining 626 were enlisted men, though Rev. Murray W. Dewart, Rev. Charles A. Donahue, Rev. Timothy A. Donovan and Rev. N. L. Tibbetts went as chaplains,

and Dr. Arthur L. Brown, Dr. Irving T. Cutter, Dr. Daniel C. Dennett, Dr. George S. Foley, Dr. Richard W. Sheehy, Dr. Herbert E. Maynard, Dr. Victor Amoine, Dr. R. J. Carpenter, Dr. E. Russell Murphy and Dr. Stanley B. Weld were in medical or dental service. The greater part of the Winchester contingent was of course to be found in the ranks of the Twenty-Sixth or Yankee Division, New England's special contribution to the fighting forces of the nation. Many of the later enlistments, however, were in the Seventy-Sixth Division, which, when it went to France, became a depot division, furnishing replacements for the battle divisions at the front. Others of course were still in training when the armistice ended the fighting.

In all some two hundred and seventy Winchester men went overseas, either in military or naval service. Eighty-nine names appear on the rolls as attached to the navy, and fourteen were in the Marine Corps. At least thirty were in aviation either as pilots or as ground service men. Fifty-four bore commissions from ensign or second lieutenant to lieutenant colonel. The detailed record of service for every man or woman who gave active war time service as officer, private, aviator, sailor, marine, yeoman or yeowoman, nurse, or Red Cross and Y. M. C. A. worker is to be found in a volume prepared and published by the town in 1925. It is entitled "Winchester's War Records" and contains as well similar information concerning the Winchester men who served in the Civil and the Spanish wars.

The list of those who gave their lives to their country contains eighteen names as follows:

Andrea Barbieri	Frederick Whidden Grant
Fred Nichols Brown	Joseph Hubbard Hefflon
Bartley Clancy	Frank Dana Kendall
John Corbi	Stuart Gardiner Lane
Mahlon W. Dennett	Augustus M. Leonard
William F. Donahue	Charles H. Lynch
Mario Figlioli	Edward McFeeley
William Michael Glendon	William J. Noonan
John Gironda	Chester Robinson Tutein

Joseph H. Hefflon was the beloved principal of the town grammar school, who at the age of fifty insisted on going overseas to

offer faithful and devoted service to the Y. M. C. A. in its work among the soldiers. He contracted pneumonia and died at the hospital at Neuilly January 6, 1919.

Lieutenant Chester Tutein was an air pilot. He, too, died after the armistice in a plane crash at Bar-le-Duc, France.

Captain Fred N. Brown was killed at the head of his company — Company H, Twenty-Third Regiment, Second Division — during the fighting at St. Etienne-a-Arnes in the Argonne October 6, 1918. He was awarded the Croix de Guerre with a personal citation for bravery signed by Field Marshal Petain.

Not a few Winchester soldiers won similar decorations of honor on the battlefield. Joseph R. Huntley was awarded both the French Croix de Guerre and the Distinguished Service Cross, the highest American distinction, for his heroism at Verdun, where with a single comrade he captured two German machine guns and killed or captured the twelve men who were serving them "while under constant fire."

Lieutenant Wilbert E. Kinsley, who entered the flying service from Cornell University, was also decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross for his exploit of October 7, 1918. "He was attacked simultaneously by eight enemy planes," says the citation, "but manoeuvred his plane so skilfully that his observer Lieutenant W. O. Lord was able to shoot down two of them. Later he was attacked by five enemy scout planes, and in a running fight drove them off and successfully completed his mission."

Ettore Caser was awarded the Italian War Cross for his services on that front. Divisional or regimental citations for distinguished conduct were received by Dwight W. Cooke, Dwight L. Fiske, Theodore Main, and Charles J. Quigley (who served for three years with the Expeditionary Force from Canada). Arthur E. H. Chamberlain received a letter of commendation from the Secretary of the United States Navy for his coolness and courage in extinguishing an oil fire on the U.S.S. *Paulding*.

On the third and fourth of July 1919 Winchester welcomed home its service men and women with a celebration that will long be remembered by those who witnessed it. The arrangements were in the hands of a large committee of which Selectman Arthur A. Kidder was chairman and James J. Fitzgerald secretary. A victory

arch was built at the northern end of the Common, which bore the inscription "Winchester Welcomes Her Boys." At night it was effectively illuminated by electric lights. On the evening of the third there was a dinner in the town hall at which the returned service men were present. Lieutenant-Governor Channing Cox delivered the address of the evening.

The following afternoon came the parade — the most elaborate affair of the kind the town had ever seen. Business buildings and residences were lavishly decorated, and the procession moved through the principal streets over a route three and half miles long. The heat was intense, but there were no casualties among the marchers. Arthur A. Kidder was chief marshal, and the marshals of the three divisions of the parade were James Hinds, James J. Fitzgerald and C. Herbert Symmes. It would occupy six pages of this volume to present the complete roster of the procession.¹ Suffice it to say that it was played on its way by eight bands or fife and drum corps, that the surviving members of the G. A. R., the Sons of Veterans, the Winchester Home Guard and more than four hundred men in the olive-khaki of the World War were in line, and that there were twenty patriotic floats designed and decorated by the school children, the Catholic societies of the town, the Methodist church, the Fortnightly Club, the W. C. T. U., the Winchester Grange, the Italian and the colored citizens of Winchester, the Red Cross, the Equal Suffrage Club, the Odd Fellows and other organizations. The procession was full of color and beauty, and a tribute to the taste as well as the patriotic enthusiasm of the town. In the evening a fine show of fireworks closed the celebration.

During the war the town had erected a substantial and dignified "Honor Roll" containing the names of all Winchester men or women who were in any kind of service. It still stands today on the lawn directly in front of the town hall. When the war was over, it was immediately proposed to provide a suitable and permanent memorial; that gave occasion for a long and sometimes heated difference of opinion such as the independent freemen of Winchester have always been wont to indulge in when any matter of moment is presented to them.

¹ Printed in the *Winchester Star* of July 11, 1919.



THE WAR MEMORIAL



The original committee appointed by the town meeting of 1919 reported in favor of a memorial building suitable for athletic or recreational purposes, to be erected on Manchester Field, and a second committee, of which Roland H. Sherman was chairman, presented to the town meeting of 1921 plans for such a building. It was to provide an auditorium, rooms for the American Legion, a field house for athletic purposes and a concrete stand — incorrectly called a “stadium” by the committee — capable of seating eight thousand persons.

Meanwhile warm opposition to the whole plan had appeared. There were many who wanted a monumental and not a “utilitarian” memorial, and the athletic building was criticized as wanting in dignity — as too frivolous in short for a war memorial. When the matter was put to a referendum vote in connection with the annual election of town officers the town, by a vote of 2,056 to 768, reversed itself and decided against the athletic building altogether.

A new committee of five was appointed — George C. Willey was its chairman — to consider the matter further. It took two years to do so, and ended by rejecting proposals to erect a public library or a handsome school building as a war memorial and reporting in favor of a monument — the nature of which it cannily left to the voters of the town. On motion of Mr. Parkhurst the town voted to instruct the committee to prepare a plan for a suitable monument, to cost approximately \$50,000.¹ The committee recommended that Mr. Herbert Adams, a sculptor of taste and distinction, be engaged to prepare a design for a statuary memorial. There was still some reluctance on the part of many voters to commit the town to the expense required, but when Mr. Parkhurst moved that the money be raised by voluntary subscription all opposition vanished, and the town voted to approve such a memorial to be erected at the corner of the spacious high school lot where Main Street and the Mystic Valley Parkway meet.

In due time Mr. Adams presented his design, a piece of bronze upon a pedestal of polished granite, suitably inscribed. The monument shows two gracefully draped female figures, representing Humanity and Justice, carrying in their hands a wreath of laurel

¹ *Winchester Star*, March 23, 1923; Town Clerk's Report for the year 1923.

and a sheathed sword, while behind them a battle standard floats. The group possesses dignity and grace; it was praised by many, and criticized by some who desired a conception more striking and unusual.

The memorial, be it remembered, was to be paid for by voluntary subscription. It was an unfortunate moment to undertake the raising of money, for the citizens of the town had just passed through a "drive" in which they had subscribed \$240,000 for the Winchester Hospital. The results of the campaign which began in November 1924 were disappointing. Only \$8,500 were raised, including the sums subscribed by the school children of the town. The project might have failed entirely had it not been for the generosity of Mr. Parkhurst. He had taken a deep and personal interest in the erection of a worthy war memorial in Winchester, and rather than see the thing miscarry he agreed to give whatever money was necessary over and above the subscriptions of other citizens.

That assured the completion of Mr. Adams's design. The group was cast, the pedestal provided, and on October 3, 1926 it was dedicated with impressive ceremonies. No less than thirteen American Legion posts marched in the parade, and massed their colors about the base of the monument. Mrs. George A. Neiley, who had had five sons in service during the war, was chosen to unveil the statuary, while the guns of a firing squad rang out a salute. Lieutenant-Governor Frank G. Allen delivered a brief address, and Robert F. Whitney, chairman of the selectmen, accepted the memorial on behalf of the town. Mr. John J. Murphy, State Commissioner for Soldiers' Relief, was the orator of the day. Mr. Adams, the sculptor, was present, but modestly declined to speak.¹

The memorial acquired with so much difficulty, and in the face of so many discouragements, is now generally admired. Its effect is greatly heightened by the artistic planting of evergreen trees and shrubs behind it, which form a beautiful background for the ruddy masses of the bronze.

Winchester, which in its early years grew up much at haphazard, has latterly become cautious and careful as to the character

¹ Winchester *Star*, October 8, 1926.

and the manner of its development. In 1915 it took advantage of a state law recently enacted, and established a local planning board of five members — Lewis Parkhurst, Charles F. A. Currier, Frank E. Rowe, Preston Pond and Flavel Shurtleff.¹ Mr. Parkhurst shortly resigned, and Arthur W. Dean was chosen in his stead. The Planning Board, though it has no actual authority and acts only in an advisory capacity to the other boards and officials of the town, has always been an active and useful part of the municipal machinery. It has been fertile in suggestions for location of new town ways and the widening of old ones, for the development of playgrounds, for better housing and a well-thought-out control of the growth of the community. It was in response to the recommendations of the Planning Board that the town very carefully revised its building laws in 1919 and enacted a zoning law in 1923.

The new building by-law was drawn up after prolonged study by a committee of which James S. Allen was chairman and Richard B. Derby, Sidney F. Hooper, Frank W. Reynolds and Roland E. Simonds were the other members. The requirements of the law are strict without being unfair; they were frankly drawn to prevent jerry-building in Winchester, and to discourage the promotion of cheap, hastily constructed and eventually shabby housing projects anywhere within the limits of the town. A Board of Appeal is provided to listen to complaints that the restrictions bear too hardly on contractors or house owners; but the laws are generally accepted as an excellent way of assuring an attractive and substantial community development.²

The zoning law was drawn and presented to the town by the Planning Board itself after long consultation with Arthur A. Shurtleff, a recognized authority on town and city planning. The zoning act, which was adopted by the town March 10, 1924, operated to prevent indiscriminate use of private property for building which might injure or even destroy the established nature of a neighborhood. It preserves the strictly residential character of the greater part of the town, permits business or manufacturing building on certain designated streets and limits the area in which apartment or two-family houses can be erected. The law was not passed without much discussion, for many citizens were restive at the idea of

¹ Action taken at town meeting, January 25, 1915.

² The laws came into force September 1, 1920.

submitting to restriction in the use of their own property. But the arguments of the Planning Board prevailed, and the value of the act in securing householders against the progressive deterioration of their surroundings — so common an experience in American towns — is now generally recognized.

Mr. Rowe has been a member of the Planning Board since its organization, and Mr. Dean has a record of service only a few months less. Arthur A. Kidder, William L. Parsons and Maurice C. Tompkins fill the places of the other three original members.¹ Mr. Pond, Mr. Dean and Mr. Parsons have in succession been the chairmen of the board.

The granting of the suffrage to women in 1920 made acute a situation that had already begun to trouble the town, namely the increase of the number of qualified voters far beyond the capacity of the town hall to accommodate them. With the admission of women to the suffrage, the number rose to about forty-five hundred; the hall would hold less than a quarter of them. Under ordinary circumstances it was not uncomfortably crowded, but when matters of great public interest came up the voters thronged it, and on several occasions a considerable number could not get in at all. In such cases those who were shut out might have recourse to demanding a referendum on questions on which they had been unable to vote; but referendums are expensive and dilatory, and moreover it was apparent that as the town grew the necessity for them would be more and more likely to occur.

It was suggested therefore that the town abandon its old all-inclusive town meeting and petition the legislature to pass an act establishing a limited representative town meeting in Winchester. The neighboring towns of Brookline and Arlington had already had recourse to the plan with satisfactory results. The town meeting of March 8, 1926 appointed a committee of fifteen, of which William L. Parsons became the chairman, to study the matter and make recommendations at a later meeting. The committee was an able and industrious one. Its report gave thoughtful consideration to the problem and to all the solutions proposed, and ended by advising the town to adopt the representative town meeting.

¹ Mr. Tompkins was in 1935 succeeded by Harris S. Richardson.

This report came before the voters at the meeting of March 14, 1927, accompanied by an article in the warrant directing the selectmen to petition the General Court for legislation creating a representative town meeting in Winchester.

The issue was fought out on the floor in one of those historic town meetings for which Winchester is famous. The committee's plan was vehemently opposed by Whitfield Tuck, almost the last survivor of the long line of town-meeting orators, whose readiness of speech and firmness of conviction on every subject of debate made them conspicuous figures in the political life of the community.¹ On this occasion he had the support of some speakers who rarely agreed with him, notably the veteran moderator, F. Manley Ives. The objection was made that the abandonment of the ancient town meeting would amount to the abandonment of real democracy in government, and could only result in indifference to town affairs on the part of the great majority of citizens.

The debate was long and warm. The decision hung in the balance; it is not too much to say that Chairman Parsons won his fight almost single handed. Had his arguments been less cogent, his manner less courteous and gracious and his speech less persuasive, the representative town meeting would have been voted down. As it was, the article was adopted by a vote of 355 to 304.

In due course the legislature passed the enabling act, and it then became necessary for the town to vote by referendum whether or not to accept it. The vote was taken November 6, 1928; 3,065 voted aye, 1,716 no.

The limited town meeting thus established consists of thirty-three elected representatives from each of the six precincts into which the town has been divided, together with the selectmen, the members of the Finance Committee, the town treasurer, and the chairmen of the various boards or commissions elected by the town as ex-officio members. Any citizen may attend the meetings of this body and, if he wishes, may speak on matters under discussion; but only the two hundred and thirty-eight members of the limited town meeting may vote. The system has been in operation

¹ Some of the most interesting of the reminiscences of the late N. A. Richardson are contained in a series of articles printed in the *Winchester Star* between March 25 and May 27, 1896, describing and shrewdly appraising the town meeting orators of an earlier day.

for seven years (1935). There are still some who do not like it, but on the whole it meets with the approval of the townspeople. Its sessions are certainly more businesslike though often less full of color than those of the old town meetings used to be.

In September 1928 the handsome post office building, which stands on Waterfield Road between the corner of Thompson Street and the Aberjona River, was completed and occupied. I have already¹ traced the early history of the post office; when we last saw it, it was occupying rooms in the Brown and Stanton Block and George P. Brown was postmaster for twenty years. In 1886 he was succeeded by Edward L. Garcelon, and he in turn three years later by William P. Fitch. During his term the office was moved to a larger room a little farther up Main Street, created by raising the old Thompson homestead and building stores beneath it. Mr. Fitch was retired when a Democratic administration replaced a Republican at Washington; Patrick Reardon succeeded him. He went out four years later, and J. Winslow Richardson became postmaster. In his time the post office was moved again to the Waterfield Building on Common Street where it occupied the store nearest the railway station.

James H. Roach succeeded Mr. Richardson in 1913. At this time the dream of a new post office, clean, roomy and convenient, and substantially built by the government, seemed about to be realized. Plans were drawn and sites were under consideration, but the approach of the war postponed every other form of federal expenditure, and Winchester had to wait many years more for its first creditable and convenient post office.

Mr. Roach died in office, May 23, 1917, and after an interregnum, when first Patrick E. Fitzgerald and then Ernest W. Hatch were acting postmasters, John F. O'Connor received the commission. He was succeeded in 1921 by George H. Lochman who served until 1935, when Vincent C. Ambrose succeeded him.

In 1930 Massachusetts celebrated the tercentenary of the founding of the colony of Massachusetts Bay, and the occasion was improved by more than two score towns of the Commonwealth

¹ See Chapter X, p. 143 and Chapter XV, p. 208..

for local celebrations in commemoration of the event. Winchester was one of these towns, and its recognition of the tercentenary was a notable affair. The arrangements were in the hands of a special committee appointed by the town meeting,¹ of which Harris S. Richardson was chairman and James J. Quinn, James J. Fitzgerald, Rev. George Hale Reed and Mrs. Stillman P. Williams were the other members. To this committee was added a larger Citizens Committee, headed by James Hinds as chairman and Ernest R. Eustis as secretary, and a reception committee of which Lewis Parkhurst was chairman and Rev. Howard J. Chidley, Miss Elizabeth Downs, Mrs. Ashley K. Hayden, Rev. George H. Reed and Dr. Richard W. Sheehy were the other members.

The celebration occupied parts of three days, October 12, 13 and 14, and it was made especially interesting by the presence of the Lord Mayor of Winchester, England, Mr. Harry Collis, and his wife, who were the guests of the town. Wearing his scarlet robes, his great silver collar of office and his cocked hat, Mayor Collis was a picturesque figure at all the events of the celebration, and he and his Lady Mayoress made a most happy impression on all who met them. They were entertained at several of the most charming of Winchester homes, and the third day was marked by a reception in their honor at the town hall; but it is not recorded that any of their hosts took them into the public library to exhibit to them the portrait or the bust of Colonel William P. Winchester, for whom the town was actually named.

The commemoration exercises began on Sunday evening, October 12, with a religious service in the town hall. All the clergymen in town took part. The Harvard College choir furnished the music and Rev. Dr. Howard J. Chidley, pastor of the First Congregational church, delivered an address on "Puritan Ideals and Modern America."

The next day was the fete day, with a football game, two band concerts and a procession of illuminated canoes in the evening on the Aberjona River, in addition to the great civic parade of the afternoon. This was an imposing affair, which in the language of the press "consumed two hours in passing a given point." Harris S. Richardson was chief marshal; other marshals at the head of

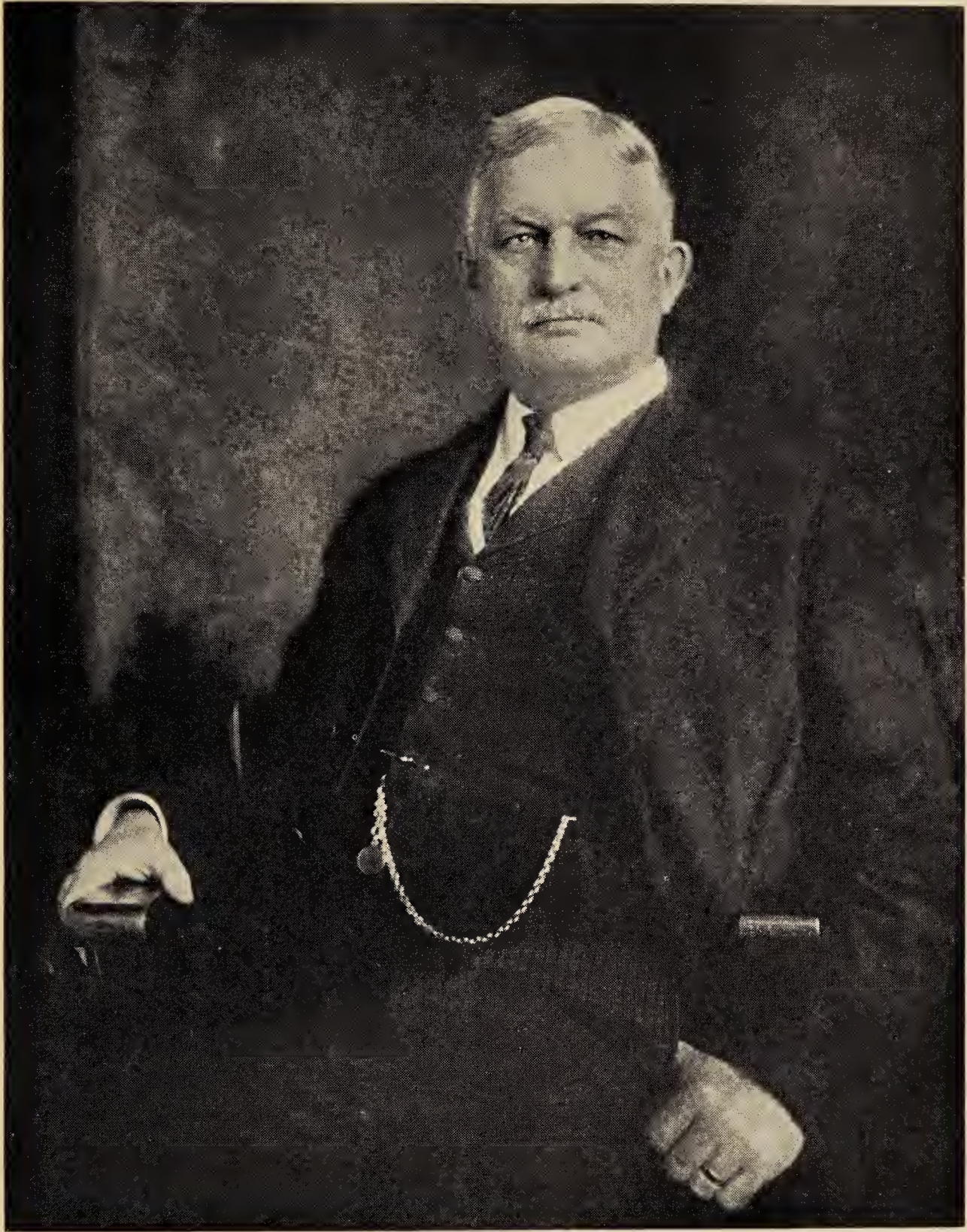
¹ On March 24, 1930.

various divisions or sections were Richard Parkhurst, Irving L. Symmes, Jonas A. Laraway, Vincent P. Clarke, Wade L. Grindle, Salvatore de Teso and William E. McDonald, Jr. The procession was led as usual by the military. A detachment of sailors and marines from the Charlestown Navy Yard were in line, and so were nine companies from the 182d Infantry, the 101st Engineers and 101st Field Artillery and the 372d Infantry, all of the Massachusetts National Guard. The American Legion division included eight posts of the Legion from neighboring towns as well as the Winchester Post, and surviving veterans of the G. A. R. and the Spanish War. Mayor and Mrs. Collis, escorted by British ex-service men, rode with this division and so did the selectmen of Winchester and the mayors of Medford and Woburn.

The division of the fire department not only included the apparatus of the present day but some interesting historic survivals — the old hand engine “Excelsior No. 1” and one of the old hand hose reels, the Black Horse Hose. These were escorted by some fifty “red-shirts” who were members or sons of members of the old fire companies of Winchester. The school children marched in force, so did the members of the various lodges and secret societies of the town, and the organizations of the Catholic church and of the Scottish, Irish, Italians and colored people in Winchester and Woburn.

The floats were perhaps the most interesting feature of the long procession. They were chiefly historical, though some like those of the Emblem Club and the Knights of Columbus symbolized “Charity, Fidelity and Brotherly Love” and “Charity, Unity, Fraternity and Patriotism.” The historical subjects included the Landing of Columbus, the Coming of the Norsemen, the Old Middlesex Canal, the Founding of Winchester, the First Colored Man to Fall in Battle for America, Columbus at the Court of Isabella, the Founding of the Leather Industry, Paul Revere’s Ride, Colonial Home Life, the Little Red Schoolhouse, and many more, while picturesqueness was added by a number of old vehicles, stage coaches, victorias, carryalls, chaises and the like, occupied by persons in costumes of the past, a feature contributed by the Fortnightly Club.¹

¹ A complete roster of the procession appeared in the *Winchester Star* of October 17, 1930.



LEWIS PARKHURST

The exercises of Tuesday at the town hall were presided over by Mr. Lewis Parkhurst. There were speeches by Mr. Parkhurst, Frederick W. Cook, Secretary of the Commonwealth, and Samuel S. Symmes. Mrs. Christine Hayden made a gracious address of welcome to the Lady Mayoress, Mrs. Collis, and William L. Parsons delivered the address of welcome to the Lord Mayor, who responded appropriately. A reception to Mr. and Mrs. Collis followed. The occasion was marked by the presentation of a silver bowl of the Paul Revere pattern from the people of Winchester, Massachusetts, to the city of Winchester, England; and of a Bicknell etching to Mrs. Collis, and a handsomely bound guide book to Boston and vicinity to the Lord Mayor. In return Mr. Collis presented to the town a number of mementoes of his visit, the most interesting of which was a casket carved from oak more than a thousand years old, taken from a ruined abbey in Hampshire, England. The gifts were accepted in appropriate terms by Harry W. Stevens, chairman of the selectmen. And so ended Winchester's tercentenary celebration.

It may be set down here as a matter of some note that Winchester has been for many years distinguished as the only town in the Metropolitan District, and perhaps the only town of considerable size in the Commonwealth, to be without a moving-picture house. At intervals for some twenty years proposals for such a theatre have been advanced, but until now public opinion in the town has been opposed. Several times the matter has been put to vote, but those who felt that the "movies" were a dubious influence on the children and young people were always able to outvote those who desired a theatre in Winchester. In 1935 the tide turned, and at a special referendum on April 9 the townspeople voted 2,475 to 1,717 that they would like the pictures admitted to the town. A year later, however, no license for such a theatre had been granted by the selectmen.

Winchester, like other places everywhere, had its worries in connection with the long business depression that began toward the close of 1929. It did not feel the effects so severely as those towns and cities which have a large industrial population, but sev-

eral hundred of its citizens found themselves out of employment, and the town had to take unusual measures for their relief. In 1930 and 1931 the needed money was largely raised by private subscription and distributed by a committee of which Frederic S. Snyder was chairman. As the depression continued the town was driven to taking over the burden, and increased greatly its appropriations for relief. In 1929 the amount set aside for welfare expenses was \$17,800; in 1934 the annual appropriations for welfare and emergency employment had risen to \$120,929.20. Private subscriptions in 1931 and 1932 amounted to \$85,345.30 and \$246,962.84 had been assigned to Winchester by the federal relief agencies up to January 1, 1936.

The greater part of this money — probably \$750,000 in all — has been spent with a wisdom rather unusual in American communities. I have already described in the chapter on the parks¹ how the local relief committee in 1930 and 1931 applied its funds to paying labor for the improvement of the mill pond, and how in later years the available money was systematically spent in a far-reaching programme of work on the waterways and playgrounds of the town. As a result Winchester has something of permanent value to show for the money conditions have obliged it to raise for relief. The misfortune of the moment has been turned to the advantage of the future, and the emergency has been used to forward projects that might have had to wait years for realization. Throughout the years of depression the affairs of the town have been prudently handled, without any yielding to the temptation of extravagance that so many communities have found irresistible. The expenses of relief, at least \$400,000 in excess of what they used to be, have all been met from the tax revenues of the town; not a dollar has been added to the municipal debt. Yet in 1925 Winchester's tax rate was \$28 per thousand of taxable valuation. In 1935 it was \$27.20. We may doubt whether many towns or cities in the United States can point to a tax rate not only not increased but actually reduced during those ten years.

¹ Chapter XVIII.

CHAPTER XXII

CLUBS AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS OF WINCHESTER

IN this final chapter are collected some of the more important facts connected with the history of the various social, fraternal and benevolent institutions that exist in Winchester. It has seemed better to do this than to interrupt the narrative of the earlier chapters by inserting this material there.

The social organization which for fifty years has borne the name of the Calumet Club has a history now approaching seventy years. It was originally organized in 1870; on March 5 of that year nine gentlemen — Thomas P. Ayer, Arthur E. Whitney, C. L. F. Bridge, George H. Carter, Henry F. Johnson, T. W. Prince, John A. Ross, George G. Stratton and Thomas W. Spurr — met at Mr. Spurr's house and laid the foundation for the "Winchester Young Men's Association." A few days later the club was finally organized, provided with a president — Mr. Ayer — a constitution and by-laws, and a home — a room in the Lyceum Building.

In its early years the Young Men's Association not only afforded a congenial social life for its members but was active in providing entertainments — lectures, concerts, amateur dramatics and dancing parties — for the rest of the town. It soon outgrew its single room in the Lyceum Building and rented another, and on the completion of the Miller Block on Pleasant Street it occupied the whole second floor of that building with its club rooms. At about the same time — April 10, 1886 — the association voted to change its name to the Calumet Club; and by 1892 it had so increased in membership that it was able to buy the land on Dix Street next south of the Congregational Church, and build thereon the attractive and commodious clubhouse which it still occupies.

The Calumet Club has included in its membership a large proportion of the townsmen who have been active in the affairs of Winchester; at one time its roll contained three hundred and fifty names. It has taken its share in all civic and community move-

ments, while it has existed primarily for the social purposes which all such organizations are meant to serve.

The Fortnightly, long the leading women's organization of Winchester, dates from December 19, 1881, when "twenty-two ladies met at the house of Mrs. Nowell¹ to concert measures for bringing forward . . . a plan for the formation of a woman's club, in which the mutual good should be aimed at, and the mental, moral and physical improvement of its members promoted. It was also hoped . . . that its influence might be extended beyond its own members and that from it might emanate . . . benefits which should tend to the general elevation of the community." To these high-minded principles the Fortnightly has always been faithful; it has always been a progressive and uplifting influence in the town.

It was among the very first women's clubs in the state; only two others of any prominence in Boston and its suburbs antedated it. Mrs. Ann B. Winsor (wife of Dr. Winsor) was perhaps more responsible than anyone else for its formation, and she was its first president. When she retired, in 1889, her fellow members in a resolution unanimously adopted said of her: "Her wise and strong leadership has made the Club a success, intellectually and socially. By her influence it has been stimulated not only to work for its own pleasure and growth, but to become a center of usefulness to the community. In any good which it may hereafter accomplish the impulse given by her hand will be felt."

The fortnightly meetings of the Club, from which it derives its name, have from the first been occasions for study and improvement, never purely social affairs. The members are divided into groups or sections which are in turn responsible for the preparation of the fortnightly programmes; Literature and the Drama, Art, Education, Current Events, History and Travel, Domestic Economy, Social Science, Economics and Government are among the topics represented. In the beginning the members had to rely on themselves for the papers presented, but as the Club grew prosperous, addresses by persons of eminence and authority in the various fields mentioned became frequent, and the club women have

¹ Mrs. Sarah J. Nowell.

for years had valuable opportunities to hear some of the most distinguished speakers in New England at their meetings.

Quite unusual is the list of valuable public services the Fortnightly has rendered to Winchester. Its members have never forgotten that the Club was founded, partly at least, to exert its influence "for the general elevation of the community." As a body, particularly in the early years when the progressive spirit in the community at large was not so effective as it is today, the Fortnightly was always thinking and planning in advance of the town itself. In 1884 it took the first steps to procure the introduction of industrial training in the public schools and to establish an evening school for adults, and when the School Committee agreed to pay the salary of a master for the evening school, the Club, aided by the Baptist Society, assumed the rest of the expense and supplied a corps of volunteer teachers. Two years later the Club itself organized a manual training class, in which boys were taught carpentry and girls sewing, and it maintained this industrial school until, some years later, the public schools took over this form of education.

The Fortnightly also had a class in physical training in Harmony Hall for several years before the School Committee was ready to introduce it into the schools. The Club took an important part in establishing district nursing in Winchester; for it was from a public meeting called by Mrs. E. O. Punchard, then president of the Fortnightly, and addressed by a number of physicians, nurses and interested citizens that the movement gained its momentum. When in 1900 the town voted to abandon the kindergartens and manual training classes in the public schools, the Fortnightly took the lead in arousing public sentiment all over the town in defence of the threatened classes, so successfully that the town hall was crowded to the doors at a special town meeting, and the appropriation for kindergartens and manual training was carried by an overwhelming vote.¹

Another matter in which the Fortnightly undertook the education of a negligent town was the danger offered by the pest of gypsy and browntail moths in 1904. It organized a house to house canvass of the town and saw to it that every citizen and every

¹ Winchester *Star*, March 30, 1900.

owner of unoccupied land was awakened to the seriousness of the situation. For its foresight and its active leadership in so many movements for the protection and improvement of the community, Winchester should always be grateful to the Fortnightly Club.

The Club has never possessed a house of its own. It has had rooms and meeting halls in various buildings of the town, and met for a time in the town hall itself. For a number of years its quarters have been in the Waterfield Building on Church Street.

The Winchester Country Club had its beginnings as early as 1897, when a number of young men interested in the then rather unfamiliar game of golf formed a club and hired for a golf course a tract of vacant land belonging to Edwin Ginn along Pond Street and Woodside Road in the neighborhood of Horn Pond. Rev. J. W. Suter was the president of this club, George G. Kellogg, William D. Sanborn, William D. Richards, Franklin L. Hunt and Edgar J. Rich were its executive committee. The little club prospered, its membership increased rapidly, as the charms of golf became understood, and in 1902 it was able to move to a more spacious and attractive location. The Winchester Country Club was incorporated with Mr. Suter still its president, and the new Club purchased the Stephen Swan estate on Cambridge Street at the Arlington-Winchester line. A course of nine holes was laid out and the Swan house, a substantial and soundly built country residence, then some sixty years old, served as a clubhouse. During its formative years the Club owed a very great deal to Mr. Marshall W. Bouvé, its vice-president. He had the executive responsibility for the preparation of the original nine-hole course and the adaptation of the Swan house for the purposes of the Club, and the work was admirably done under his direction.

The story of the Club has been one of constant expansion and improvement. The old Swan house still remains the nucleus of its social accommodations, but so much has been added to it in the way of dining rooms, locker rooms and social rooms that it is now the smallest part of a rambling clubhouse, which for all its lack of compactness has managed, through the skill of the architect, Mr. F. Patterson Smith, to maintain a kind of harmony and a definite charm. The great barn of the estate, connected by various addi-



VIEW FROM THE COUNTRY CLUB GOLF COURSE



tions with the house, has been converted into a delightfully unusual hall for dances and other festivities. The characteristic interior structure of an old New England barn has been preserved, but adapted with fine taste to the new purposes which the building serves.

Long ago the golf course was extended to eighteen holes over land purchased by the Club. Donald Ross was the architect, which is a guarantee of the high character of the course as a test of a golfer's skill. The holes pass over a rolling, rather hilly country, well, but not too well, wooded, and from the highest parts of the course there are lovely views of the Mystic Lakes and the Middlesex Fells in the distance. The Winchester course is admitted to be one of the three or four finest about Boston.

Rev. Mr. Suter remained president of the Club till 1913, when Mr. Samuel J. Elder succeeded him for two years; then for twenty years the Club had the good luck to have the same president, Mr. John Abbott, and the same treasurer, Mr. Joseph L. S. Barton, and it is to the diligence and intelligent care of these two men above everything else that the Club owes its unusual character. Mr. Erastus B. Badger is now its president.

Boating has always been a popular pastime in Winchester, for the town possesses abundant opportunities for its enjoyment. In the earlier days — the fifties, sixties and seventies of the last century — Wedge Pond seems to have been the favorite scene for aquatic sports, but in later times, and especially since the introduction of the sailing canoe, the wider reaches of the Upper Mystic Lake have been preferred. In the late eighties the Shu-shu-ga Canoe Club was formed by a few enthusiasts, including H. Dudley Murphy, Robert and George C. Coit, Henry and William D. Richards and the brothers Shattuck, Appolonio, and Holt.

The Club built a small house on the bank of the Aberjona opposite the Wedgemere station, a little way above the entrance of the river into the lake, and laid the foundations for the enjoyment of one of the most delightful of summer sports by the young people of Winchester.

The interest in canoeing increased with the years, and the necessity for a larger and better equipped club became apparent.

In the summer of 1900, therefore, the Winchester Boat Club was organized. A group of gentlemen, including George Adams Woods, J. Murray Marshall, Robert Coit, Herman Dudley Murphy, Sumner T. McCall and T. Price Wilson, took the necessary steps to secure land on Cambridge Street bordering the cove of the Upper Mystic Lake below the aqueduct, and to erect a clubhouse of which Mr. Coit was the architect. Mr. D. Nelson Skillings was the first president of the Club, Mr. Carl Siedhof the first secretary and Mr. Murphy the captain of the fleet. The house was finished and dedicated on May 30, 1901, on which date the first club regatta for canoes both with and without sails was held.



WINCHESTER BOAT CLUB

The Club was ambitious enough in its first year to challenge the Royal Canoe Club of England in the single sailing canoe races held at Langston Harbor on the South Coast, and Mr. Murphy was sent to England to represent the Club in the races of August 1901. He upheld the colors of the new club with credit, but returned without the Challenge Cup.

Ever since its inception the Boat Club has been a popular Winchester institution, especially among the young people, for canoeing, both with paddle and sail, upon the waters of the beautiful Upper Mystic Lake is one of the most delightful of summer sports.

Every year there are at least three club regattas, on Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day, besides a succession of week-end races through the summer. The Club maintains cordial relations with the Medford Boat Club at the southern end of the lake and often meets its neighbors in friendly rivalry.

Float nights and water carnivals are picturesque social events that from time to time occur, dances at the clubhouse are frequent, and there are tennis courts for those who wish to pursue their athletic exercise on the land as well as the water.

Early in the life of the Club the Mystic Challenge Cup, a silver trophy procured by subscription among some of the citizens of Winchester, was put into competition. It is offered for single canoes under sail, and it was originally stipulated that it should always be sailed for on the waters of Upper Mystic Lake. A time came, however, when interest in that sport declined so far in Winchester that there were no challengers from among the club members. It became the practice for holders of the cup to accept challenges on other waters. The Mystic trophy has been raced for on the Charles River Basin in Boston, at a number of places among the Thousand Islands of the St. Lawrence and on Lake Pocotopaug in Connecticut. It is one of the most coveted and most hotly contested trophies in American canoeing.

In mentioning the social organizations that have given color to Winchester life the Winchester Orchestral Society which flourished between 1909 and 1917 must not be forgotten. Mr. W. H. W. Bicknell, the famous artist, was the begetter of this interesting organization, which for eight seasons entertained the Winchester public with a succession of concerts in which the best of music was very creditably performed by a band of amateur musicians, all or nearly all, residents of the town. The orchestra project was supported by a local organization of which Mr. J. Herbert Dwinell was the president. The band numbered about thirty performers, and under the baton first of Mr. John Little and later of Mr. S. Henry Hadley and Mr. Henry Eichheim it brought home to its audiences the grandeurs and the charms of the music of Mozart, Handel, Beethoven, Schubert, Haydn, Wagner and a score of lesser geniuses. In 1917 it became necessary to bring the concerts

to an end for financial reasons, the Society being unwilling to exist any longer on the generosity of a few public-spirited citizens who had been meeting the annually recurring deficits. The best music is still a luxury for which few American communities are willing to tax themselves.

Winchester is not without its flourishing musical organization, however, for in 1929 the Choral Society was formed, with Mr. J. Albert Wilson as its director. The Society, which numbers about one hundred voices, gives two or three concerts of high artistic quality every season to audiences which fill the town hall. Mr. Wilson still remains (1936) its very capable conductor.

The Winchester Art Association was formed in 1932 with the object of encouraging an appreciation of the beauties of art in the community. Mr. Marcus B. May was its first president; on his death within a year, Mr. Henry S. Chapman succeeded him. The Association provides monthly exhibitions of paintings, sculpture, drawings or etchings in the excellent art gallery in the Public Library Building and occasional lectures on subjects connected with art. The most distinguished artists of Boston and its vicinity have shown their work in Winchester under the auspices of the Association. Mr. Charles H. Watkins is now (1936) its president.

In recent years the drama has attracted the talented young people of Winchester with excellent artistic and financial success. There are flourishing dramatic societies connected with both the Congregational and Unitarian churches, which give two or three plays every season in the parish house halls of those churches. The performances are well attended and uniformly excellent. More lately a Theatre Group has been organized which presents equally well-acted plays in the high school auditorium.

The A. D. Weld Post No. 148 of the Grand Army of the Republic was formed in 1872. Its charter bears the date of May 22. There were twenty-two charter members, led by the name of Dr. Frederick Winsor. The first commander was John T. Wilson. Its original hall was on the top floor of the Lyceum Building, but when the town hall was built, a room was planned for the Grand Army on the third floor of that building, and that room the Post occupied until its dissolution in 1932 at the death of its last member;

James A. Dunnell. Daniel W. Kimball, a former member of the Post, was still living in Winchester in 1936, the last survivor of the Civil War in the town.

During the earlier years of its history the Post not infrequently promoted lectures by distinguished speakers. Many of them were on topics connected with the Civil War, delivered by officers who had acquired fame in the field; but once at least the G. A. R. went far afield and brought to Winchester Charles A. Bradlaugh, the famous English free-thinker and Member of Parliament.

The Post, so long as its membership was adequate, conducted the annual Memorial Day services, including the decoration of the graves of deceased veterans. There was always an impressive procession to Wildwood Cemetery, and for many years a memorial address was delivered there by a speaker, often of wide reputation. Year by year, however, the ranks of the G. A. R. were thinned by death, and much of the responsibility for the Memorial Day observance was gradually taken over first by the Sons of Veterans and since 1920 by the American Legion Post which now conducts it. The last commander of the A. D. Weld Post was Henry Smalley who died in 1924.

The John T. Wilson Camp, Sons of Veterans, was organized in 1915 and for many years led a useful and sturdy existence. J. Irving Johnson was its first commander. The Camp is now dormant.

Post No. 97 of the American Legion was formed June 10, 1919 when one hundred and fifty service men met in the town hall, effected a temporary organization and voted to apply to the state headquarters of the Legion for a charter. At this meeting John O'Melia was elected commander, Charles N. Eaton vice-commander, Henry Donovan adjutant, Daniel F. Hanlon financial officer, James W. Blackham historian and Murray W. Dewart chaplain. These officers became permanent when the Post was officially constituted a few weeks later.

By the end of the year the membership of the Post was above three hundred, and it has always been one of the active and prosperous Legion Posts in Massachusetts. For two years it maintained rooms in the Brown and Stanton Block and held its meetings in the town hall. At the town meeting of March 21, 1921 it was voted

to give the use of the Cutting house, which stands on Washington Street between the town hall and the public library, and which had for several years been town property, to the Post as a Legion house; \$1,200 was appropriated to make such alterations and repairs as were necessary to fit the building for that purpose. The house was ready for occupancy in late September 1921 and was dedicated on October 8. On this occasion there was a military and civic parade, to which a number of the merchants and community organizations contributed handsomely decorated floats. At the conclusion of the parade there were brief exercises at which Chairman Joseph A. Dolben of the Board of Selectmen turned the house over to the Legion, and Commander William E. Ramsdell accepted it for the Post. The day ended with an outdoor carnival on the grounds surrounding the house, with booths or tables presided over by representatives of the Legion Posts, the Fortnightly Club, the En Ka and Sigma Beta sororities, the Legion Auxiliary, the Winton Club and the Catholic Daughters of America.

The Post has continued to occupy this house ever since 1921, and finds it a cheerful and attractive home. On February 28 and March 1 the Legion, in association with the Fortnightly, held a very successful bazaar in the town hall to raise money for sick and disabled soldiers; and on September 29, 1923 it gave an equally successful lawn carnival to procure funds for furnishing a memorial room in the Legion house in recognition of the young men of Winchester who gave their lives in the World War.

The Legion Auxiliary, composed of women who are closely related to members of the Post, was organized in 1923, and maintains an active and useful existence. There is also a chapter of the World War Mothers of New England. It was organized in October 1934 by Mrs. A. Beatrice Thompson and installed December 17 of the same year by Mrs. John H. Gilbody.

The Winchester society of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union was organized May 23, 1876. That was a time, as noted in a previous chapter, when the temperance movement both among men and women was taking on new life and energy, and the Winchester society was distinguished from the first by its devotion to the cause of total abstinence and its activity in the campaign

against strong drink. The first president was Mrs. Mary A. Sharon. Among her ten successors two are to be especially mentioned for their long years of service, Mrs. Almira Rowe who was for nineteen years the president, and Mrs. Grace M. Hamilton who occupied the same post for twenty-five years — from 1906 to 1931. The names of both these ladies are inscribed upon the Book of Remembrance at Evanston, Illinois, which contains the names of the women who have done conspicuous service in the cause of temperance. Mrs. Hamilton was for many years president of the Middlesex County W. C. T. U.

The Winchester W. C. T. U. has always been a vigorous and devoted organization. It has had a fluctuating membership, which at times has reached to between one hundred and fifty and two hundred. It carried on an active propaganda for total abstinence in the town and prohibition in the nation; its victory dinner after the adoption of the Eighteenth Amendment was held in the vestry of the Congregational Church and was attended by more than two hundred and fifty women. The Union has always paid especial attention to temperance education among the school children, believing earnestly that the foundation for a temperate and moral life cannot too early be laid.

Mrs. Alfred W. Friend is at present (1936) the president of the Union.

The Boy Scouts of America, a branch of the famous world-wide organization founded by Sir Robert Baden-Powell, was established in 1910. Four years later it found a foothold in Winchester, where a Scout troop was organized by Robert W. Fernald, who became its scoutmaster. Troop I has preserved its organization ever since. It enjoys a peculiar distinction among the troops in Massachusetts, for no less than four of its members, Philip Hight, Stanley McNeilly, Henry Newman and Albert Cutter, have received awards for the saving of life. Each of these boys rescued a drowning person. "I know of no other troop in New England," wrote the secretary of the National Court of Honor to Francis E. Smith, scoutmaster of the troop, "which has such a record as this."¹

Several other troops were organized in 1915 and they were

¹ Letter of August 14, 1930.

attached to the Mystic Valley Council of Boy Scouts when that council was established. The boys were active not only in their scout duties but in giving what service they could in war work. After the war there was a period when interest waned, and the organization was kept alive mainly through the devotion of Robinson Whitten, scoutmaster of Troop III. But that moment passed, and scouting enjoyed an enthusiastic revival in Winchester. At present (1936) there are four active troops in the town, sponsored by the Congregational, Episcopalian and Baptist churches and the American Legion. The Scouts have bought the old stone building off South Border Road which Edward A. Brackett built years ago for a fish hatchery, and they use it for gatherings both of Scouts and officials. The Winchester troops have been since 1930 attached to the Fellsland Council which includes also the troops from Medford, Stoneham and Woburn. The Council owns a well-equipped camp on the Powwow River in Amesbury. It is the old Coombs farm and in addition to the venerable brick house, now nearly two hundred years old, which is used for administration purposes, there are a number of cabins and dormitories, sufficient to accommodate one hundred boys. The camp is well filled all summer long, and a great variety of outdoor sports and nature studies are carried on there.

The Scouts have more than once been helpful in the search for children lost in the Middlesex Fells, and they are proud of the work they did in assisting in setting out the evergreen plantations at the South and Middle Reservoirs.

The Girl Scouts Council was formed May 18, 1917 at a meeting at the home of Mrs. Addison R. Pike who was the first commissioner. Four troops were quickly formed, and the work of the organization went forward with enthusiasm. Like the Boy Scouts the girls have been always ready to give what help they could in civic and community enterprises. The number of troops has increased to eight, and there are also several "Brownie Packs" as the troops of smaller girls are called. The commissioners have been Mrs. Pike, Mrs. Charles H. Eastwick, Mrs. J. F. Ryan, Mrs. Howard J. Chidley, Mrs. Louis K. Snyder, Mrs. Clifton S. Hall, Mrs. Jan Friis and Mrs. James O. Murray.

The Girl Scouts have built a very attractive cabin which

stands near Brooks Street on the land of the Brooks estate at the edge of the town. It is in constant use for troop meetings, officers' conferences and social gatherings, and in the summer the Scout Council conducts a day camp there, which offers to the girls of Winchester many of the attractions and advantages of a summer camp without leaving their homes. Visits to the famous Cedar Hill estate, which Mrs. Storrow presented to the Girl Scouts of the Boston district, are frequent and always enjoyable.

As a means of raising money for the maintenance of the troops, the Girl Scouts have revived the June Breakfast, once so pleasant a function in support of the Winchester Hospital, and the town hall is well filled on the day chosen for the fete. There were in 1936 about two hundred and fifty girls actively connected with the Scouts.

Free Masonry in Winchester dates from the formation of the William Parkman Lodge in 1864. The first step was taken by Abijah Thompson, 3d, who invited several brother Masons living in the town to meet at his house one evening in January of that year. A. K. P. Joy, Dr. William Ingalls, David N. Skillings and Josiah F. Stone responded. A second meeting on February 13 enlisted the attendance of several others, and a third meeting, on March 4, appointed Mr. Joy, Mr. Thompson and Dr. Ingalls a committee to apply to the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts for a dispensation under which a local lodge could be formed. In due time the dispensation was granted, and on May 10 the new lodge was organized with A. K. P. Joy as Master and Josiah F. Stone and Abijah Thompson, 3d as Wardens. These gentlemen together with Cephas Church, Edward P. Boon, William Pratt, A. H. Field, Albert G. Lane, Henry C. Whitten, Philip Nolan, Samuel P. Bartlett and Oliver L. Wellington were the charter members. The permanent constitution of the lodge was held June 22, 1865 at its rooms on the top floor of the Lyceum Building in the presence of the officers of the Grand Lodge and a "large assembly of ladies and gentlemen." The lodge derives its name from William Parkman, Esq., who was Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the State at the time the charter was granted.

The Masonic rooms remained in the Lyceum Building until

1877, when, on the completion of the Brown and Stanton Block, they were removed thither where they have ever since remained.

By 1920 the number of brother Masons in Winchester had become so large that a second lodge was deemed advisable. A petition for a dispensation was addressed to the Grand Lodge and granted; under it the Mystic Valley Lodge of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons was organized April 8, 1920 with William M. Belcher, a Past Master of the William Parkman Lodge, as Master, and Amasa Harrington and Harris M. Richmond as Wardens. The constitution of the lodge, according to the ancient usage, occurred on December 30, 1920.

The Mystic Valley Lodge shares the Masonic apartments in the Brown and Stanton Block with the William Parkman Lodge.

In 1921 a Royal Arch Chapter was formed in Winchester, and there is also a strong chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star in existence.

It was more than forty years ago that the Independent Order of Odd Fellows instituted Waterfield Lodge, No. 231, in Winchester. The date was November 4, 1894. Benjamin T. Morgan was the first Noble Grand, and the charter members included Edwin Robinson, Thomas S. Hoyt, Fred S. Scales, Theodore P. Wilson, James McLaughlin, Havelock Erskine, Albert J. Young, W. D. Erskine, George E. Pratt and Jonas A. Laraway. Meetings of the lodge were originally held in the Masonic rooms in Brown and Stanton Block, and later in Lyceum Hall. In October 1927 the Odd Fellows bought the house on Vine Street formerly occupied by the Knights of Columbus. This was the old home of Dr. Frederick Winsor, which had once stood at the corner of Main and Mt. Vernon streets in the center, and had been moved by Dr. Winsor to its present location. It had of course been much altered and covered with a coat of stucco. The building was dedicated to the uses of Waterfield Lodge in January 1928.

The lodge has had an uneventful but prosperous history. It has initiated three hundred and twenty-five members, of whom about a hundred are still united with it. There is also a flourishing lodge of the Daughters of Rebekah connected with the order.

The Winchester Lodge of Elks, No. 1445 of the Order, was instituted May 10, 1922. John McNally was the first Exalted Ruler of the lodge. This organization, which is one of the most flourishing of all the social and benevolent orders, has always been strong and popular in Winchester, and the Emblem Club, which is its women's auxiliary, is no less active and beneficent. Both lodge and club have their meetings in Lyceum Hall. Mr. Fred H. Scholl of the local lodge has been District Deputy Grand Exalted Ruler of the order in Massachusetts.

The Winchester Grange (No. 343) Patrons of Husbandry, was organized in 1914; its charter was granted on February 24 of that year. Frederick M. Symmes was the first Grand Master, and the original membership was forty-nine. It has nearly doubled in size since it was founded, and offers to its members valuable social and educational opportunities, especially appreciated by those who love the soil and enjoy its cultivation. The Grange meets monthly in Lyceum Hall.

There are several social organizations among the business men of the town. The oldest is the Chamber of Commerce. This was originally formed as a Board of Trade in 1918, but four years later its name was changed. It may be said to be a lineal successor of the Village Improvement Association, and its purposes are similar. The Chamber is active in a hundred different ways to improve the conditions of community life in Winchester. Mr. Charles H. Symmes was the first president of the organization, which has much in its history to commend it to the gratitude of the town.

The Winchester Rotary Club was formed in 1927. Mr. George T. Davidson was the original president. The Club, like all similar clubs, is made up of one member from each of the professions or businesses in the town. In addition to its social meetings which are held at the Calumet Club every week and are often addressed by speakers of distinction, Rotary has many useful civic achievements to its credit, including the raising of considerable sums of money for the Winchester Hospital, an annual dinner at Christmas time for the less fortunate children in the town, etc.

In 1929 the local Lions Club was formed, Dr. John R. Wallace being the first president. The Lions also meet regularly at the Calumet Club. Their membership includes one or two representatives of each business or profession. The fundamental charitable interest of the Lions is the care of the blind; the opportunities for that in Winchester are not large, but the Club has been active in various other useful ways, particularly in the support of the Winchester Hospital.

The Winton Club and the En Ka Society are two associations of young women which, apart from their social aspect, are both deeply interested in supporting the Winchester Hospital. The Winton Club, founded in 1911, contributes to the maintenance of the surgical rooms and the operating theatre, and raises money for that purpose by an annual cabaret "show" in the town hall, which is one of the chief social events of the season. The En Ka, which began as a high school sorority, keeps the linen room of the hospital supplied, and has of late promoted a very amusing "Street Fair" as a means of raising the needed money.

The social organizations of Catholic membership in Winchester are numerous and well-supported. The oldest is the Knights of Columbus; the charter of the local council dates from February 28, 1897. The charter members, thirty-nine in number, included such well-known citizens as William J. Daley, John Lynch, David H. DeCoursey, John T. Cosgrove, John F. Holland and Francis J. O'Hara. It was long an active and prosperous society, took a leading part in the war work of the community in 1917 and 1918, and took justifiable pride in the fact that twenty-eight of its members served with the colors. In 1920 the Knights acquired the house on Vine Street in which Dr. Frederick Winsor had lived, and occupied it as a clubhouse. The building was in process of further improvement when on January 14, 1921 it was very seriously damaged by a fire that put the resources of the town fire department to a severe test. The Knights immediately set to work to repair and remodel it and continued to occupy it until 1927 when the house was sold

to the Odd Fellows. The Knights of Columbus now holds its meetings in White's Hall at Church and Main streets.

Santa Maria Court, No. 150, of the National Order of the Catholic Daughters of America, was organized in Winchester in 1921. This order is the official auxiliary of the Knights of Columbus, but it functions in complete independence. Miss Mary Riley was the first regent of Santa Maria Court. The Catholic Daughters of America are active in social and charitable affairs, were conspicuous among the various groups which supported the community activities during the war, and form the largest organization of Catholic women in the town.

The Massachusetts Catholic Order of Foresters has a flourishing chapter in Winchester (Court No. 225) which was instituted on March 16, 1908. It includes both men and women in its membership, and is benevolent and charitable in its purposes. No less than \$38,000 has been paid to the families of deceased members since the Court was organized. Timothy J. O'Leary was the first Chief Ranger. Mrs. Isabel L. McKenzie has served as Chief Ranger for twelve years and Mr. David Meskell for six. There are at present (1936) one hundred and forty-seven members of the court.

There are also active chapters of the Catholic Women's Guild and the Guild of the Infant Saviour in Winchester. These organizations are devoted to the support of the numerous charities maintained by the Roman Catholic Church.

The citizens of Winchester who are of Italian birth or blood have had since 1930 a very flourishing lodge (No. 1580) of the Order of the Sons of Italy. Two years later the women of the same race organized a lodge of the Daughters of Italy, and there is also a junior division of the Sons of Italy, which includes the boys and girls of the rising generation. October 12, Columbus Day, is the great day in the year for these lodges, and it is fittingly observed each year by a celebration, of which track and field sports are a leading feature.

There is also a local lodge of the Society Christoforo Colombo, a popular social and benevolent order with an Italian membership.

For many years the Italian people of Winchester celebrated

the recurrence of the feast of the Assumption in mid-August with a two-day programme, the most spectacular feature of which was a really brilliant display of fireworks on Manchester Field. The occasion became widely famous among the surrounding towns, and crowds so large as sometimes to be troublesome were attracted to the field. In 1932 the fireworks were omitted; the day is still marked by religious processions, and a band concert on Manchester Field.

EPILOGUE

More than forty years ago, a young lawyer in Boston, having just married, and desiring to find a home in one of the suburbs of the city, went to Charles Francis Adams, second of the name, for his advice on so important a matter. Mr. Adams, all his life a resident of what today we call Greater Boston, was at that time the chairman of the newly formed Metropolitan Park Commission, and few men were so well informed about the geography, scenery and community character of the towns and cities that surround Boston.

"Where," asked the young lawyer, "would you advise me to make my home?"

Mr. Adams did not hesitate. "In Winchester," he said. "Quite apart from the attractiveness of the town and its surroundings, you will find in the community a very unusual civic spirit. The people of that town take an intelligent interest in the management of its affairs and in its continual improvement and beautification. You can't do better than go to Winchester."

We hope that the judgment of so competent an observer as Charles Francis Adams may fairly be said to have been justified by the history of more than eighty years. Certainly there is an informed and progressive civic spirit in Winchester. The people of the town are proud of it; they believe it to be a good town in which to live and intend year by year to make it a better one. They have been liberal in spending money to improve its streets, to extend its park and playground system, to make its schools both as buildings and as instruments of education as good as the best, and to furnish the community with every desirable means of culture and comfortable living. They have displayed a unity of feeling and a deep attachment to their town which is rather rare in suburban places. The most capable citizens have always felt their responsibility for the proper management of Winchester's affairs, and have been ready to give devoted and unselfish service in the offices and on the boards that are charged with the government of the town. As a result that

government has always been honest, prudent and efficient. Without extravagance or even lavishness of expenditure Winchester has got the value of every dollar it has asked of its taxpayers, to the envy of some of its neighbors, who with comparable revenues have not seen them expended with comparable wisdom and foresight.

Endowed by nature with beauty, and developed by its people with affectionate and generous care, Winchester after almost three hundred years of community life is a New England town in which are expressed (we believe) the best of the qualities and virtues of the New England folk — their thrift, their prudence, their orderliness, their proper pride in maintaining a self-respecting home and community life, their interest in religion, education and the various aspects of that side of life we call — a little vaguely — culture. May the next three hundred years be as worthy of commemoration as the past.

APPENDIX A

REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS

Who lived within the present limits of Winchester at the
time of their service or in later years

Joseph Belknap	Jeduthan Richardson
Captain Samuel Belknap	Jesse Richardson
Zachariah Brooks	John Richardson, Jr.
Joseph Brown	Jonathan Richardson
Samuel Carter	Luke Richardson
Benjamin Converse	Nathan Richardson
Robert Converse	Peter Richardson
Andrew Evans	Zachariah Richardson
James Gardner	Zachariah Richardson, Jr.
Benjamin Hadley	Bill Russell
Captain John LeBosquet	Captain John Symmes
Jonathan Locke	Samuel Symmes
Josiah Locke	William Symmes
Job Miller	Nathaniel Watts
Daniel Reed	Samuel Watts
Abel Richardson	Philemon Wright
Abel Richardson, Jr.	David Wyman
Ebenezer Richardson	Hezekiah Wyman
Eleazer Richardson	Paul Wyman
Gideon Richardson	Jesse Wyman
James Richardson	

APPENDIX B

ELECTED TOWN OFFICERS OF WINCHESTER SINCE THE INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN

SELECTMEN

(The dates given are the years in which they were elected. Their terms of office were from March to March; when reëlected for several terms the dates given are their first elections and the last years of their term.)

Nathan B. Johnson	1850, 1851
Loring Emerson	1850, 1851
Charles McIntire	1850-1852
Asa Locke, Jr.	1852, 1853
Gardner Symmes	1852, 1853
Aaron D. Weld	1853, 1857, 1860
Oliver R. Clark	1854-1857, 1863-1869
Nathaniel A. Richardson	1854-1856
Charles Kimball	1854-1856, 1859
Luther R. Symmes	1856, 1858
Cephas Church	1858-1860, 1862
Samuel M. Rice	1858, 1859
Sherborn T. Sanborn	1860, 1861
Wallace Whitney	1860, 1861
Thomas P. Ayer	1861, 1862
H. K. Stanton	1862, 1863, 1872, 1873
Josiah F. Stone	1863, 1864, 1871, 1872, 1875-1876, 1878
David N. Skillings	1864-1867
Samuel W. Twombly	1865-1870, 1886
John T. Manny	1867-1870
John C. Mason	1869-1871
Daniel W. Locke	1871-1873, 1877, 1878
John R. Cobb	1872
John T. Wilson	1873

Samuel S. Holton	1874-1876
Albert Ayer	1874, 1890, 1892, 1897
Henry A. Emerson	1874, 1919
Asa Fletcher	1874
Robert Cowdery	1874
Warren Johnson	1877, 1885
Charles H. Dunham	1879, 1882
Henry C. Miller	1883, 1885
James Russell	1885, 1887-1892
David O. Blanchard	1886-1888
Arthur E. Whitney	1889, 1891
James F. Dorsey	1889, 1890
James H. Winn	1889-1892, 1893-1896
Charles W. Shattuck	1891
George W. Payne	1891, 1893
Marshall H. Dutch	1892-1894
John L. Ayer	1893-1896
Edward H. Stone	1894-1896
George H. Carter	1895-1897
Henry J. Winde	1896-1898
Henry F. Johnson	1897-1899
Lewis C. Pattee	1897-1900
Henry C. Holt	1898-1899
Francis J. O'Hara	1898
Nathan H. Taylor	1899-1902
James P. Boutwell	1899-1901, 1910, 1911
James J. Fitzgerald	1900-1902
Edward F. Jones	1900-1902
Charles W. Bradstreet	1901
John Challis	1902-1905
John H. Carter	1902-1906
George C. Coit	1903, 1904
Samuel S. Symmes	1903-1906
Sanford D. Leland	1903
Frank L. Ferguson	1904
Ralph J. Ellis	1904
Frank E. Rowe	1905, 1906
William E. Beggs	1905-1907

George Adams Woods	1905, 1906
William D. Richards	1906-1909
James H. Dwinell	1907-1909
F. Eugene Barnard	1907, 1908
Frank W. Winn	1907-1909
Peter Walling	1908, 1910
George B. Smith	1909, 1910
Preston Pond	1910-1912
William M. Belcher	1910-1912
George R. Nugent	1910, 1911
William J. Daly	1911-1913
Addison R. Pike	1912, 1913
Elbridge K. Jewett	1912, 1913, 1917
George T. Davidson	1913-1916
Maurice F. Brown	1913, 1914
Frederick N. Kerr	1914-1916
Charles E. Kendall	1914-1916
Henry C. Sanborn	1914-1916
George B. Hayward	1915, 1916
Robert B. Metcalf	1917
Rufus L. Clark	1917
Jonas A. Laraway	1917, 1918
John F. O'Connor	1917
Sewell E. Newman	1918-1920
Patrick Noonan	1918
Herbert L. Cox	1918, 1919
George C. Ogden	1918
Arthur A. Kidder	1919, 1920
Roland E. Simonds	1919
Joseph A. Dolben	1920, 1921
James W. Blackham	1920-1921
William L. Parsons	1920
George M. Bryne	1920-1923
J. Waldo Bond	1921
George W. Willey	1921
Thomas R. Bateman	1922-1925
Edward B. Smalley	1922
Charles R. Main	1922-1924

Edward W. Berry	1923
Walter H. Dotten	1923-1930
Robert F. Whitney	1924-1926
William P. Callahan	1924-1926
Dr. J. Harper Blaisdell	1925-1928
John H. Powers	1925-1927
Thomas F. Fallon	1927, 1928
Joseph W. Worthen	1927-1929
Harry W. Stevens	1928-1930
Harris S. Richardson	1929-1932
Vincent P. Clarke	1929-1932
Irving L. Symmes	1930, 1933
William E. Ramsdell	1931
Harold V. Farnsworth	1932-1935
Henry J. Maguire	1932-1934
Donald R. Waugh	1933
Edward H. Merrill	1933, 1934
William N. Beggs	1934, 1935
Franklin J. Lane	1934, 1936
Raymond S. Wilkins	1935, 1936
James J. Fitzgerald, Jr.	1935, 1936
W. Allan Wilde	1935, 1936
Arthur S. Harris	1936

TOWN CLERKS

David Youngman	1850-1856
Josiah Hovey	1856-1865
George P. Brown	1865-1874
Warren F. Foster	1874-1883
George W. Spurr	1883-1890
Albert Ayer	1890-1898
George H. Carter	1899, 1909, 1910-1920
John G. Hovey	1909, 1910
Arthur A. Kidder	May 3-June 7, 1920
Mabel W. Stinson	1920-

TOWN TREASURERS

Samuel B. White	1850-1854
Alvin Taylor	1854-1857
Nathaniel A. Richardson	1857-1861
Stephen Cutter	1861-1873
John T. Manny	1873-1887
George W. Spurr	1887-1890
Thomas S. Spurr	1890-1910
George H. Eustis	1910-1924
Harrie Y. Nutter	1924-

MODERATORS

(Until 1914 a moderator was chosen at each regular or special town meeting. Several different men, therefore, are listed as serving in many of the early years. Since 1914 the Moderator has been annually elected.)

Samuel M. Rice	1850
Oliver R. Clark	1850-1853, 1856-1858, 1860-1866, 1868, 1869, 1871
Loring Emerson	1851
John A. Bolles	1851-1854
William A. Dodge	1851
Frederick O. Prince	1852, 1857
Nathaniel A. Richardson	1853, 1856, 1858, 1859
Josiah F. Stone	1853-1854, 1869, 1871, 1877, 1880
A. J. Bellows	1854
Charles P. Curtis, Jr.	1857, 1862
Salem Wilder	1860, 1867, 1868, 1870, 1873
Dr. Alonzo Chapin	1862, 1867, 1870, 1874
William A. Stone	1864
A. K. P. Joy	1865
William Everett	1866
Henry B. Metcalf	1868, 1870
Charles H. Moseley	1868
David N. Skillings	1872, 1874
James H. Prince	1872
John T. Wilson	1872, 1873, 1881-1884, 1887-1897

Thomas P. Ayer	1871, 1873-1880, 1885, 1886
James F. Dwinell	1875, 1895
George F. Parker	1876
Henry F. Johnson	1876
F. H. Nourse	1878, 1879
Alfred S. Hall	1886
Arthur H. Russell	1897, 1898-1901, 1903, 1905, 1907, 1909, 1910
George L. Huntress	1898
George S. Littlefield	1898
William C. Newell	1899
Edgar J. Rich	1902-1904
Ralph E. Joslin	1904-1906
George C. Coit	1906
Charles N. Harris	1907-1910
Howard D. Nash	1909
Frederick Manley Ives	1911-1925
George B. Hayward	1926-

WATER COMMISSIONERS

(Since 1907 Sewer Commissioners also)

David N. Skillings	1873-1877
Moses A. Herrick	1873-1890
James F. Dwinell	1873-1894
Irving S. Palmer	1878-1882
D. Nelson Skillings	1882-1902, 1904-1913
Lewis Parkhurst	1891-1898
John R. Freeman	1894-1896
Charles T. Main	1896-1907
George L. Huntress	1898-1904
Henry C. Ordway	1902-1910
Sanford D. Leland	1907-1910
Nathan H. Taylor	1910-1916
Maurice F. Brown	1910-1912
Arthur E. Whitney	1912-1918
Harold K. Barrows	1913-1916
Edmund C. Sanderson	1916-

Charles E. Kendall	1917-1934
Robert B. Davis	1918-1920
Edward S. Mansfield	1920-1924
Clarence P. Whorf	1924-
Elwell R. Butterworth	1934-

SEWER COMMISSIONERS
(Merged with the Water Board in 1907)

Daniel W. Pratt	1894
Henry C. Miller	1894-1899
Frederick V. Wooster	1894-1904
Charles E. Corey	1895-1906
Charles M. Thompson	1899-1901
Frederick M. Symmes	1901-1907
Franklin C. Pillsbury	1904
Stillman Shaw	1905, 1907
John F. Holland	1906, 1907

PARK COMMISSIONERS

Forrest C. Manchester	1893-1899
D. Nelson Skillings	1893-1902
Louis Goddu	1893-1898
James F. Dorsey	1898-1906
Nicholas T. Appolonio	1899
A. Allen Chamberlain	1900-1902
Edmund H. Garrett	1902-1907
Preston Pond	1903-1910
Jere A. Downs	1907-1911
Frank F. Carpenter	1907-1911
Maurice F. Brown	1910
Harry A. Wheeler	1911-1915
Clarence E. Ordway	1911-1916
Charles A. Lane	1911-1916
Frederic C. Alexander	1915-
Alfred B. Carhart	1916-1922
George T. Davidson	1917-
William S. Packer	1922-

PLANNING BOARD

Flavel Shurtleff	1915-1921
Arthur W. Dean	1915-
Frank E. Rowe	1915-
Preston Pond	1915-1924
Charles F. A. Currier	1915-1918
Lewis Parkhurst	1915 (resigned)
Richard B. Derby	1918-1924
Maurice C. Tompkins	1921-1935
William L. Parsons	1924-
Arthur A. Kidder	1924-
Harris S. Richardson	1935-

COLLECTOR OF TAXES

Samuel Kendall	1850
Samuel S. Richardson	1851
James Bridge	1852
Nathaniel A. Richardson	1853-1860
Francis H. Johnson	1861
Mial Cushman	1862-1884
Albert Ayer	1884
George W. Spurr	1885-1890
Aaron C. Bell	1890-1906
John G. Hovey	1907-1909
A. William Rooney	1910-1917
Mabel W. Stinson (<i>pro tem</i>)	1917
F. Nelson Hawley	1918 (resigned)
William H. Stinson	1918-1924
Walter H. Dotten	1924
Nathaniel M. Nichols	1925-

	ASSESSORS
Cyrus Bancroft	1850-1863
Ezekiel Johnson	1850
Gardner Symmes	1850-1851
Thomas O. Hutchinson	1851
Marshall Symmes, Jr.	1852-1853
John S. Richardson	1852
Hiram Andrews	1853
Joshua Lane	1854
Oliver J. Locke	1854
Alvin Taylor	1855
Asa Fletcher	1855, 1863
Marshall Symmes, Jr.	1856-1860
Asa Locke, Jr.	1856-1857
Marshall Wyman	1857-1861
Samuel M. Rice	1858
Stephen H. Cutter	1858-1861
Horatio Symmes	1860
Loring Emerson	1862-1864
Albert Ayer	1862-1868
Charles Pressey	1864-1866, 1880
A. H. Field	1865, 1866
Luther Richardson	1867
Josiah F. Stone	1867-1872, 1875, 1878
Jacob C. Stanton, Jr.	1867-1870
Sumner Richardson	1871
Josiah L. Smith	1871
William Adams	1872-1877
Andrew N. Shepard	1874
Mial Cushman	1879-1883
Sherburn T. Sanborn	1880
George W. Spurr	1881-1886
James Russell	1884-1885
Warren Johnson	1885-1889
Samuel W. Twombly	1886-1890
Aaron C. Bell	1890-1893
George G. Kellogg	1891-1896
Thomas H. Stinson	1894

George H. Carter	1895-1920
George W. Bartlett	1897-1899
George W. Payne	1899-1912
John T. Cosgrove	1900-1902
Fred V. Wooster	1903-1920
Percival B. Metcalf	1913-1924
Ralph S. Vinal	1920
Harry T. Winn	1921-
James Hinds	1921-1924
Frank H. Enman	1924-
John F. Cassidy	1924-

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(There have been many changes in the size of the School Committee. There were three members in 1850, five in 1851, seven in 1852, five again from 1853 to 1858, six from 1858 to 1864, three from 1865 to 1874, six from 1874 to 1888, five in 1888, four in 1890, three from 1890 to 1920 and six since that year.)

Frederick O. Prince	1850-1852
Rev. John M. Steele	1850-1852
Charles Goddard	1850, 1860
Charles Kimball	1851-1855, 1858, 1859
Oliver R. Clark	1851-1854, 1856-1858, 1863
David Youngman	1851, 1852
Marshall Symmes, Jr.	1852
Dr. Alonzo Chapin	1852, 1866-1876
Rev. Reuben T. Robinson	1853, 1856-1862
Nathaniel A. Read	1853
Charles P. Curtis, Jr.	1853, 1854
Dr. William Ingalls	1854-1857
Stephen A. Holt	1854, 1861, 1862
John A. Bolles	1854, 1858, 1859
A. J. Bellows*	1855
William Brodhead	1855
Rev. E. W. Clark*	1855
H. K. Stanton	1855

* Elected in 1855 but declined to serve.

Luther Richardson	1855
S. L. Lothrop	1855
Josiah Hovey	1855-1857
Aaron D. Weld	1856-1858, 1861
William E. Simonds	1856
Rev. E. B. Eddy	1856-1859
Samuel D. Quimby	1857, 1862
James A. Woodbury	1858
Alfred Norton	1858
Abraham B. Coffin	1859, 1860
James Russell	1859-1862, 1882-1888
Edwin A. Wadleigh	1860-1865, 1879-1887
Sherburn T. Sanborn	1860
Salem Wilder	1861, 1863
William F. Young	1862
Samuel S. Holton	1862
T. S. Chandler	1862, 1863
A. K. P. Joy	1863, 1864
William F. Stone	1863-1864
Allen F. Boone	1863, 1864
Rev. Henry Hinckley	1864-1866
Charles Pressey	1864-1866
Dr. Frederick Winsor	1864-1868
James H. Prince	1864
Benjamin F. Ham	1866
James C. Johnson	1867-1873, 1876
Rev. Richard Metcalf	1867
Wilson Palmer*	1867
Samuel J. Bronson	1868
Rev. George Cooke	1869-1873
Luther G. Barrett	1873
Joseph H. Tyler	1874, 1876-1879
George W. Gardner	1874-1879
Mrs. Ann B. Winsor	1874-1879
Mrs. Elizabeth P. Pressey	1874-1880
Mrs. Mary S. Lamson	1874-1876
George S. Littlefield	1875-1878, 1883-1897

* Served from September 2 to October 11 only.

Leone S. Quimby	1876-1881
Horace F. Barnes	1877-1880
Alfred S. Hall	1880-1882
Mrs. Ellen Bradford	1880, 1881
Mrs. Martha S. Metcalf	1881-1884
Eugene Tappan	1881-1883
Mrs. Eleanor Huse	1881-1884
Dr. Daniel March, Jr.	1884-1887
Mrs. Clara T. Shepard	1886-1887
Mrs. Maria M. Twombly	1886, 1887
Lewis Parkhurst	1888
Samuel S. Symmes	1888-1901
Stephen W. Reynolds	1888, 1889
Rev. John W. Suter	1889-1901
William B. French	1898-1900
Dr. Albert F. Blaisdell	1901-1908
Charles F. A. Currier	1901-1914
Frank F. Carpenter	1902-1906
Ralph E. Joslin	1906, 1907
Rev. Frederick H. Means	1908
Marcus B. May	1909-1914
Arthur F. Odlin*	1908
Charles E. L. Wingate	1908-1910
Edgar J. Rich†	1910
George C. Coit	1910-1918
Henry C. Metcalf	1912-1917
Ralph B. Redfern	1914-1916
Stillman P. Williams	1916-1923
Henry S. Chapman	1918-1922
Robert P. Guild	1919-1924
Dunbar F. Carpenter	1921-1923
Mrs. Rho F. Zeublin	1921-1922
Mrs. Stella R. Root	1921-1923
William A. Barber	1922-1924
Mrs. Elsie B. Tompkins	1922-1928
Danforth W. Comins	1923, 1924

* Served from March to September only.

† Served from March to November.

Mrs. Grace H. Hight	1924-1929
Robert M. Stone	1924-1929
Edward A. Tucker	1924-1933
John A. Maddocks	1925-1928
Frederick C. Clement	1925-1930
Mrs. Georgia Y. Farnsworth	1929-1931
Arthur S. Harris	1929-1935
Joseph W. Butler	1930-1936
Mrs. Madge H. Spencer	1930-1936
Burton W. Carey	1931-
James S. Allen	1934-
Kenneth F. Caldwell	1935-
Mrs. Nita A. Smith	1935-
Mrs. Caroline P. Spaulding	1936-
Geoffrey C. Neiley	1936-

TRUSTEES OF PUBLIC LIBRARY

Rev. Reuben T. Robinson	1859-1867
Aaron D. Weld	1859, 1860
Thomas Emerson	1859-1862
James Russell	1861-1863
Dr. Alonzo Chapin	1863-1874
Rev. Henry Hinckley	1864-1866
Wilson Palmer	1867-1869
Dr. Frederick Winsor	1868-1885
Samuel J. Bronson	1868
Daniel D. Patten	1869-1873
Joseph H. Tyler	1874-1881
Edwin A. Wadleigh	1875-1883
Robert B. Metcalf	1881, 1884-1886
Alfred C. Vinton	1882-1887
Arthur E. Whitney	1886-1903
Lewis Parkhurst	1887, 1888
Frederick H. Page	1888-1890
Horace D. Bradbury	1889-1898
Edwin N. Lovering	1891-1902
James F. Dorsey	1898-1901

George W. Davenport	1902-1904
George H. Eustis	1903-
Theodore C. Hurd	1904-1911
Robert Coit	1904-1922
Edgar J. Rich	1912-
Francis E. Smith	1923-
Ralph T. Hale	1929-
Mrs. Jennie C. Gates	1929-
M. Walker Jones	1929-

BOARD OF HEALTH

(From March 1, 1852 to April 30, 1868, the Cemetery Commission was entrusted with the duties of a Board of Health. From 1868 to March 27, 1878 the Selectmen discharged those duties. The following are the officials since the constitution of the independent Board of Health.)

Dr. Frederick Winsor	1878-1888
Abraham B. Coffin	1878-1891
Phineas W. Swan	1881
Edward A. Brackett	1882-1891
Dr. Benjamin F. Church	1889-1906
Daniel W. Pratt	1891, 1892
Edwin Robinson	1891, 1892
Alfred S. Hall	1892, 1893
Dennis B. Winn	1892, 1893
Louis F. Cutter	1893, 1894
Fred S. Canedy	1893
Charles H. Jordan	1894
Willard C. Stilson	1894
Charles H. Bowman	1894, 1895
Charles E. Shattuck	1895-1897
Charles M. Thompson	1896-1901
Charles N. Harris	1897-1902
James Hinds	1901-1907
John I. French	1903-1905
William M. Mason	1905-1908
Dr. Clarence J. Allen	1907-1919

Frederick M. Ives	1907-1911
Marshall W. Jones	1908-1920
Danforth W. Comins	1911-1919
Dr. Mott A. Cummings	1919-1923
Mark R. Jouett, Jr.	1920-1925
Dr. J. Harper Blaisdell	1924-
William A. Kneeland	1925-
Richard Parkhurst	1926-

CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS

(Between 1851 and 1889, The Cemetery Committee)

Charles Russell	1851
Loring Emerson	1851
Nathan B. Johnson	1851
Charles Goddard	1851
John A. Bolles	1851-1855
Marshall Wyman	1851
Oliver R. Clark	1852-1872
Charles Kimball	1851-1860
Aaron D. Weld	1851-1863
Harrison Parker	1851-1857
Gardner Symmes	1851-1860
James A. Woodbury	1858-1860
Sherburn T. Sanborn	1861-1880
H. K. Stanton	1861-1877
Luther R. Symmes	1861-1875
Stephen Thompson	1863-1875
Mial Cushman	1872-1880
George P. Brown	1876-1882, 1901-1910
Abijah Thompson, 3d	1876-1881
Henry F. Johnson	1878, 1879, 1881-1899
George G. Stratton	1874-1888
Henry A. Emerson	1881-1894
Charles E. Redfern	1882-1896
David O. Blanchard	1883-1888
Alfred S. Hall	1889-1896
John B. Rhoades	1889-1905

Samuel W. Twombly	1895-1910
Charles F. Lunt	1896-1900
Daniel W. Kimball	1897
Charles W. Bradstreet	1897-1906
Joseph J. Todd	1898-1903
Henry J. Winde	1900-1920
James H. Dwinell	1903-1909
Charles A. Gleason	1907-
James Nowell	1910-1919
Joseph L. S. Barton	1910-
Daniel W. Pratt	1910
Ernest R. Eustis	1911-
Albert A. Reed	1920-
Charles J. Ramsdell	1921-1925
William H. Bowe	1926-

BOARD OF PUBLIC WELFARE

(Until March 1924, this board was known as the Overseers of the Poor. From 1854 to 1890 the selectmen acted as Overseers of the Poor. The following are those elected since the independent board was created. There were at first four members, but in 1895 the board was reduced to three.)

Albert Ayer	1890-1895
Charles H. Winn	1890, 1891
Mrs. Cynthia J. Pierce	1890-1901
Mrs. Emily C. Symmes	1890-1892, 1901-1913
Henry F. Johnson	1890-1891
Henry M. Shepard	1891
George H. Carter	1892-1920
Mrs. Lucinda E. Mason	1893-1895
Patrick Dowd	1894-1900
Dr. Charles F. McCarthy	1901-1918
Miss Bernice W. Billings	1914-1919
Dr. Irving T. Cutter	1919-1921
Miss Mabel W. Stinson	1919-1920
Miss A. Natalie Jewett	1920-1923

Patrick Noonan	1920-1921
Miss Frances Fitzgerald	1921-1925
Nathaniel M. Nichols	1922-1926
Mrs. Alice L. Martin	1926
Herbert W. Kelley	1926-1927
Miss Mary E. Martin	1927, 1928
Mrs. Marion P. Powers	1927-1929
Albert L. Huckins	1928-1933
Miss Nellie M. Sullivan	1929-
Stockton Raymond	1929
Mrs. Lilla G. Ryan	1930-1933
Earle E. Andrews	1933-
Malcolm S. Nichols	1933-1936
Francis E. Smith	1936-

REPRESENTATIVES TO GENERAL COURT

(From 1857 to 1896 Winchester and Arlington comprised one legislative district. From 1896 to 1922 Winchester and a part of Medford were joined in a single district. Since 1922 Winchester has formed a separate district.)

Frederick O. Price	1850-1851
Zachariah Richardson	1852
Joseph Stone	1853
Cephas Church	1854
Aaron D. Weld	1855
Alvin Taylor	1856
John Schouler (Arlington)	1857
Oliver R. Clark	1858
Joseph Burrage (Arlington)	1859
Charles Heyward	1860
Albert Winn (Arlington)	1861
Frederick O. Prince	1862
Samuel Butterfield (Arlington)	1863
Charles Goddard	1864
Joseph S. Potter (Arlington)	1865-1869
Salem Wilder	1868

Jesse Bacon (Arlington)	1869
Samuel W. Twombly	1870
David N. Skillings	1871
J. Winslow Pierce (Arlington)	1872
John T. Manny	1873
Abraham B. Coffin	1874
Samuel O. Hicks (Arlington)	1875
William H. Kinsman	1876
William G. Peck (Arlington)	1877, 1879
Josiah F. Stone	1878, 1880
Thomas P. Ayer	1880
John C. Harriss (Arlington)	1881
James F. Dwinell	1882
John H. Hardy (Arlington)	1883
Samuel J. Elder	1884
Warren A. Pierce (Arlington)	1885, 1886
Samuel W. McCall	1887, 1888, 1891
William H. H. Tuttle (Arlington)	1889, 1890
Fred Joy	1892
J. A. Bailey (Arlington)	1893, 1894
Forrest C. Manchester	1895, 1896
John F. Libby (Medford)	1897, 1898
Samuel W. Twombly	1899, 1900
Lombard Williams (Medford)	1901, 1902
Alfred S. Hall	1903, 1904
Barker B. Howard (Medford)	1905, 1906
Lewis Parkhurst	1907
Frank E. Barnard	1908
Wilton B. Fay (Medford)	1909-1911
Winfield F. Prime	1912-1914
Luther B. Lyman (Medford)	1915
William A. Kneeland	1916-1918
Richard B. Coolidge (Medford)	1919, 1920
Thomas R. Bateman	1922-1930
William E. Ramsdell	1932-

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